



THE
True History of the
Tragicke loves of
HIPOLITO and ISABELLA
Neapolitans.
The second Edition.

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To the Volume.



T sale of all things,
humane and diuine,
Since all sorts line,
what sels lifes sacred line,
And with that life the soule puts under
Presse,
Me thinks should render rich Men, Mi-
dasses:
Here then th'immortall soule is sold,
with life
Of two, by Loue made one, in Man and
Wife.
Loue breeds Opinion, and Opinion Loue,
In whose Orbs all the liberall Sciences
moue.
All which contracted in one Tra-
gedy,
Sell (great Octavius,) and Augustus
be,
In all worth, for thy sale commodity.

G. G.



THE
TRUE HISTORY
of the tragicke loues of
Hipolito and Isabella,
Neapolitans.



Mongst all the accidents
that vsually draw men
into the greatest admi-
ration & astonishment,
there are none so strange
or prodigious as those
which Loue produceth: A passion, or
rather fury, so violent, as that, ouer-
throwing the reason and vnderstanding
of those it seazeth, it leaues them no
consideration of the euent of what it
makes them vndertake. And although
B the

the examples of the warres, euersions of Kingdomes and estates, with the errors it hath caused the wisest men to commit, and the ruines into which it hath precipitated the greatest personages, be so ordinary as no man can be ignorant of them; yet wee finde scarce one that will make the right vse of them; neuerthelesse, they ought to be knowne, to the end that some more happy than the rest, may by the representation of others miseries, be diuerted from falling into the like. Amongst the chiefest where this passion hath displayed her tragicall effects; This of which I now vndertake to write, deserues a remarkable place.

Italy hath been in all times a region fertile in high and noble spirits, and capable of the greatest & fullest fruits of vertue or vice, and also the most amorous and subiect to loue of all other Nations: which hath been the occasion
that

that the men (finding this inclination so common and naturall to them) haue ordained the lawes for the liues of women so strict & seuer in their restraint, to which they subiect them, as not assured of their chastities without the interdiction of the sight and frequentation of men, excepting onely the conuersation of their neere allies. Now amongst all the Townes of *Italy*, where vertues and faire exercises are in greatest commendation, and where is commonly the best and noblest company, *Naples* is one of the chiefe, and where there is a greater liberty then in other Cities of the Countrey. In this Citie there liued a Gentleman, *Fabritio* by name, who as well for the much desert of his vertues, as for the noblenes of his descē, held the place of one of the most honoured Magistrates of the Citie; In which charge he so wel demeaned himselfe, and got himselfe so good a reputation

tion, as hauing buried one Wife; hee married a second, of birth and meanes much aboue his owne: for though both Nature and Fortune had yeilded him enough, yet they both had more aduantaged her than him. This Woman by name *Linia*, had to her first Husband a Lord of the best bloud of the Country, who left her two children, the eldest named *Pompeio*, the other *Cornelio*. *Fabritio* had by his first Wife amongst other children a daughter named *Isabella*, the which besides an excellent beauty with which she was adorned, was endowed with so great an vnderstanding, as she seemed not onely to surpassse those of her age, (which was then about fifteene or sixteene yeares) but to leaue short of her, all those that euer nature had produced excellent of her sex, in such sort as she was esteemed and admired of all as the wonder of her time. And that which
yeilded

of *Hipolito and Isabella.* 5

yeelded her more luster, was a certaine
braue and proud fashion, but suited with
a sweetnesse agreeable to her age and
condition, that made her loued and fea-
red both at once. Those whom Na-
ture hath giuen to taste the sweetnesse
of a fatherly loue, may imagine what
pleasure and contentment Signiour *Fa-
britio* receiued in being father of many
hopefull children, especially of so rare a
treasure as this daughter, being withall
fauoured with so great an increase of
fortunes, and conuenience (by this se-
cond marriage) to breed & more high-
ly aduance his children, and chiefly his
Isabella: for whom he & his wife *Livia*
had designed a marriage with *Pompeio*
(her eldest sonne by her first Husband)
who of her part also was most glad to
haue so happily found for her selfe so
good a Daughter, and her Son so faire a
Wife, breeding her more carefully then
if she had been her naturall child. The

good and commendable proiect of this marriage being agreed on by these Parents, and wheron they built the principall happinesse of their house and family, brought them much more ruine then it had promised them contentment ; being the ordinary pleasure of fortune to build vpon the foundation of our designs, euent most contrary to our hopes. This Maid to whom the greatnesse of her wit (with her knowledge of Letters) did aduance the discourse of her soule to the iudging of things farre aboue her sex, or what her age might seeme to beare, did make her also disdaine that which shee thought vnworthy of her faire parts, bestowing her time more on priuacy than conuersation, partly in study, partly in Musicke ; sometime marrying with her Instrument her voice, which she had perfectly sweet ; sometime vsing her Needle in working some rare Story, or curious

ous Hieroglifique, that every thing might bee a witnesse of the well spending of her time.

Being arrived at the seventeenth yeere of her age, shee had notice given her by her father of her appointed husband, with much discourse of the sense she ought to haue of so good a fortune. To which shee made such answer, as a Father may expect from such a daughter; who besought him onely to leave yet a while some liberty to her youth, and time to frame her selfe to the obedience of a Husband.

Livia being discreet and wise, and knowing many imperfections in her Sonne, had left him to abide euer since her marriage in a Countrey house of hers, some eight or ten miles from *Naples*, where she kept discreet and well-fashioned people about him, to the end to correct and some way amend the ill habits of his minde and body, for cer-

tainly hee was borne vnpleasing to the eye, and very vncapable of any thing gentle or vertuous : but as it is vnpossible to ouercome so great an enemy as Nature, (which though you beat from you, yet will returne againe) so proued the care of his Mother, and the paine of those about him most vnprofitable to this young man, who hauing attained to the age of twenty two yeeres, was then aduertised by his Mother of her intention for his marriage, of which the beauty of this faire Maide made him so greedily desirous, that after his first sight of her he had no disposition to be from his Mistresse, who then began to looke better upon him then shee was woont to doe before shee knew her Fathers pleasure. So frequentation made her know him, and her knowledge of him to disdain him ; her disdain bred hatred, her hate despaire, and despaire those strange resolutions in her that you shall

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shall hereafter vnderstand. In this time an Vncle of hers, called *Hipolito*, was returned home from *Bolonia*, where he had remained foure or five yeeres, as well to study, as to learne Horfmanship, Fencing, Musick, and other commendable parts besitting a Gentleman; in which hauing bestowed himselfe to the age of one or two & twenty yeeres, his elder Brother (who assumed the office of a Father) thought it fit to call him home to aduise with him of the settling of his estate.

This young man being returned to *Naples*, faire mannered, handsome, that knew to dresse himselfe well, and whose speech was gracefull and pleasing, was forthwith knowne and affected of all, but chiefly of his Neece, with whom (as well through the affinity of their natures and yeeres, as of their blood) hee was receiued into that peculiar degree of friendship and primacy,
as

as if he had been her brother; yea more, they had so great a communication and mutuall relation each with other, as they were growne to esteeme it an injury to themselves not to make each master of the others neereſt thoughts. They had not long lived in this fashion, when the young Maid acquainted him with her appointed marriage, and her little affection to it, complaining much of the cruelty of her fortune, and the ſevere reſolution of her Father, to couple her with a man ſo ill ſuting her in every thing, and who (ſetting aſide the advantage of his birth and meanes) had nothing in him remarkable.

The company of this Vncle of hers increaſed ſtill her diſdaine againſt her lover, by the approofe hee gaue of her opinion of the others wants, whoſe company annoyed them both more then they were pleaſed with, in ſuch ſort, as they ſought all meanes to free them-

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themselves of it, and retire to reading and other mutuall pleasures betweene themselves. But as it is easie and most ordinary for extremities even in vertuous things to slip into vices, so this excellent friendship could not long containe it selfe within the bounds and limits of his duty, but growing to a farther liberty by their private frequentation, began to bee accompanied with a certaine vntimeasured doting vpon this retirednesse, and a melancholy passionate griefe in absence each of the other, and a loathing of all other company, and in conclusion, (it being the custome of their age to discourse of loue more then any other subiect) loue so mingled with them, that it became the master of both their hearts. And although their yeeres had as yet given them little practise in this affaire, and that feare tooke from him, and shame from her, the ordinary meanes of declaring their affections;

affections ; yet the quicknesse of both their apprehensions made them both soone acquainted with their reciprocal passions. Which encouraged *Hipolito* one time among the rest, to take this advantage of a discourse they had had of loue, and the thraldome his subiects liue in, and speake to this purpose.

Certainly Neece I haue read a maxime, which I now receiue for purer truth then heretofore, that men cannot rightly iudge or discourse of the true quality of any passion, without hauing had some triall or feeling of it himselfe; and whereas I haue diuers times with your selfe and others, inforced in my discourses what I had read and heard of the strange effects of loue, and how there is no passion, nor any part of the soule that yeelds not to it, and that reason and prudence are able to make but weake resistance against it, yet I must confesse I spake rather for arguments

ments sake, then belecuing in the truth of what I related, esteeming indeed, that affect the easiest to gouerne and hide of most others. But I must now confesse all true, and much more then I could haue said or can, that might expresse the admirable effects that loue produces, and strong hand it holds ouer our reasonable part.

How now Vncle ! (answered shee) will the lawes of our friendship allow this, that you haue thought one thing, and spoken another to me ? Pardon me Neece (answered *Hipolito*) it hath not beene that I would barre you of any thought in my bosome, nor that I would, or alas could hide this from you ; feare onely hath denied mee the libertie. Neither thinke (I beseech you) that I would any way offend you, or faile in the least cause of a friends dutie, but rather double my respect and obseruance, as the subiect and cause is increased ;

increased ; and will beleene that the occasion of this discourse is happened mee by fate , to remoue my feare, and giue you some occasion to approve the power of this Deity in mee, whom of a free man it hath made a captiue, and instead of that Vncle and friend, I haue beene hitherto to you, your seruant and vassall ; and turned all my free thoughts into so deuoted an obseruance, that they haue no will left to will any thing but obedience to your thoughts, to honour you, to desire you, and lastly, to make mee so acceptable to you, as to bee by you, onely esteemed worthy your affection.

The teares and earnest sighes that accompanied these words, stayed them there, and made her no lesse amazed at their vnexpected nouelty , then troubled and doubtfull, what answer shee might fittest make to them : the conformity of her passion of the one side
more

that

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more then halfe yeelding, and of the other, her maiden bashfulnesse drawing her with no lesse violence backe ; at last after a little silence , the witnesse of some change in her thoughts, quoth shee, I doe now finde it true that I haue heard wise people say ; that a vertuous and faire appearance often couers a vicious designe ; and for this reason, if solitude had not beene ordained to our sexe, I had so disposed of my selfe, as to shunne the vnhappy consequence, which ordinarily (by my obseruatton) follow the societie and haunting with men, euen those that opinion ranks amongst the honestest, but you I thought so innocent of dissembled purposes, and all your courses so led by vertue, as nothing but your selfe could haue perswaded mee (I being what I am) you would haue intended any thing against that which I shall euer hold deerer then my life. I see the too
much

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much neereneſſe I haue allowed you, giues the boldneſſe to take this advantage, (or it may be the gueſſing mee too eaſie,) to trie and know the diſpoſition of my humour, it being otherwayes impoſſible you ſhould attempt the honour of one ſo neere you, as nature binds you to the preſeruation of it; but ſince it is thus, I hope hereafter to let you better ſee, I deteſt theſe things, and neither your ſubtiltie nor company pleaſe me.

Thoſe which being yong beginners in loue, haue to an extreme paſſion, receiued ſuch a refuſall, may conceiue the anguiſh this anſwere brought to poore *Hipolito*, who thought hee heard a ſentence againſt his life; and loſing colour, ſpeech, and vnderſtanding, remained a good while without ſpeaking; at laſt returning to himſelfe as from an extacy, with a trembling voyce, as full of ſighes as words, hee made this anſwere.

swer. If my fortune have led me to an enterprize so harmefull to my selfe, and to you so offensive ; your perfections, the divine force of love , or my cruell destinies, not my will must be accused; which hath but by violent necessitie offended you. O be satisfied with the infinitie of those other miseries that I see prepared for me, without adding to them the privation of your company, and leave me yet the short comfort of that trouble, whereof I hope ere long, by the end of my life to deliver you, & my selfe by the same meane, from the punishment of my rashnesse, the which I earnestly beseech you not to imagine to have beene guided by any craft or subiltie. I have all my life had this vice of dissimulation in too great a horror to bee able now to use it ; especially with you, towards whom (though it were familiar to me) yet the laws of my affinitie and love would forbid it

C

me.

- mee: Beleeue mee, truth accompanies my wordes; and the respect of your honour, my intentions: which haue no other end then the assurance of your fauour, and of a more particular affection then friendship may dispence with you to beare to another: 'tis no breach of your honour that I pretend vnto; nor more then I will hope you may thinke belongs to me, being but so farre a preferring me before others, as the obligation of nature, and our vowed friendship makes to become due to me.

He was beginning to say more, when one came to call them to supper: so as *Isabella* had onely leisure to tell him that shee was to heare no more of those matters: which thrust him yet farther into despaire; by which occasion, and the many teares hee had shed, his face was so changed, that hee was faine to perswade his brother and sister in law, that hee was not well, so excusing him selfe

selfe for not supping, he went to a house of another of his brothers, a Notary, a rich man, and there lodged with another fourth brother named *Scipio*, somewhat elder then himselfe, where hee lay with opinion of euery one that hee was sick as hee seemed, and removed his brother from his chamber, to the end to enioy more fully the libertie of his plaints and Passions, which all the night held him in such vnrest, as he not onely slept not, but fell into a feauer, a fit bodily disguise for the affliction of his minde. Hee lay foure daies contending in his reason, with loue for the mastery: and to beat him from the hold hee had got in him, but alas, what resistance can men make against gods? Hee was already in the snare, which the more hee struggled to get free of, still the faster held him, and was forced backe to the pursuit of his vnfortunate loue. Hee resol-

ued to take more courage, and to write to his mistresse, since hee had neither meanes nor assurance to see her.

She was no lesse diuided, by as great a ciuill warre of loue, sometimes accusing her selfe of ingratitude, sometimes of crueltie, for casting him shee loued best of all worldly things, into so great a dispaire: of this she would excuse her selfe vpon a greater fault, that shee had too easily receiued the first offer of his seruice whom diuine, humane, and the lawes of publique honesty, had forbidden her.

In the meane time *Hipolito* was often visited by his brother *Fabritio*, and had speech with him of the marriage of *Pompeio* with his daughter, which hee seemed much to approoue of, wisely dissembling his griefe, and offering *Pompeio* his seruice in all good offices to his mistresse, for which he honourably importuned him. Amongst these passages
Hipolitos

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Hipolito's foot-man, fit enough for such employments, brought *Isabella* a letter from his master, faining to bee onely sent to inquire of her health. The fellow being gone, shee retired into her chamber, and read the letter, which was to this purpose.

IF I had left me any power to command my desires, I might bee content to discourse only with my selfe, of the sufferings of my most vnhappy condition, without importuning you with the view of my afflictions; but since loue hath inforced the subiection of all my will to his lawes, and your seruice, pardon me (I beseech you) if inforced by both these, I flie to your pitie, which I implore with al the vowes of my soule, as the only helpe and meane left me to escape a neuer ending tormēt. Though it be vneasie to you, yet you owe it him, who honors you aboue al worldly things, & adores you as the only modell

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of all excellence here below: who lines not but by you, nor desires life but for you, and to bee so happy, as to spend it in your seruice, to which I am so vowed, as heauen shall as soone bee false as I alter this resolution. Accept, if you please, this deuotion, and governing it by what lawes you shall thinke fit, make your selfe of it what assurance my life or death can yeeld you, and let not cruelty which findes some limitts, euen in them to whom it is proper and peculiar, bee a perpetuall blot to your faire vertues, in not suffering me to finde that mercy at deaths hand, that I may not at your.

A weake perswasion will carry a diuided and doubtfull minde, to that part whither it selfe inclines; so these letters finding her leaning more to loue then dutie, forced her through all the doubts that could oppose themselves, and after some discourse with her selfe, of

such differing accidents in those occurrences as her able vnderstanding set before her : reason at length gaue place to loue, and respect to passion ; but with this resolution, not to engage her honour, or by any thing confesse her purpose till the last shee could possibly delay it to ; and the next morning shee sent this following answere.

IF I had not by all the points of a faithfull obseruance, assured you of as perfect a friendship as you can desire of me, I should allow the complaints of your letter ; being incident to every good disposition, to desire a friendship with his kindred ; or if our case were such as wee might expect the end their desires looke to, who seeke the vniion of their liues, by the holy knot of a lawfull loue, I should receiue that passion you complaine to suffer for my sake, as a most assured testimony of the worthy opinion you held of mee, to
C 4 whom

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whom you would permit your selfe to ad-
 dresse such an affection; but since I am
 assured of the one, and cannot hope
 any thing of the other; I aduise you re-
 store your selfe to reason, that you may
 condemne (as you ought) your griuings
 for their unfitnesse, your passions as li-
 centious, and beyond the bounds of your
 part; and to shew you that pitie hath in
 me an equall place with friendship, since
 you put your selfe vpon the rules of my
 discretion, I beseech you lay from you
 your vniust griefes, and impossible hopes,
 and expect from mee, onely all the effects
 of a most solid and most perfect friend-
 ship, such as my honour, and what I am
 to you can bestow vpon you; in so doing,
 you shall finde my faith constant aboue
 the least change, that any thing of this
 world can indeanour to make in it. This
 I promise; this I sweare to you; and
 coniure you to be contented with this vt-
 most I can doe, and not seeke to intice my
 affection

affection beyond the bounds of my duty, assuring my selfe in so reasonable a sure, your desires will agree with mine. I will lastly, intreat you to bee well, that I may sodainly receive the pleasure of your company.

This letter was better Physicke to *Hipolito's* disease, then all the Physicians of *Naples* could giue him, which hauing read ouer, and ouer, infinitely often, hee was much troubled on what resolution to settle himselfe, and as a minde possest with desire, is euer there-with accompanied with feare, so did he giue so diuers interpretations to the letter, as not a word in it, but hee made to suffer a double vnderstanding, sometime taking it for generall and indifferent words, sometime gathering somewhat thence to his owne aduantage: after many discourses of his fantasie, hee resolved at last on the better part,
and

and hope making him take heart, began by that meane to recall his health so well, as that within two dayes, leaving his chamber, hee went to visit a sister of his, a Nunne, betweene whom and him, by reason of the simpathie of their natures, there was an extraordinarie loue and amity.

This Nun, vnderstood but too much for her profession, and was then of the age of thirtie five yeeres, hauing more exercised her wit about honest affaires of the world (as farre as the restraint of a Cloister might suffer her) then in the strict obseruance of the duties of her order.

The Lady *Isabella* her Neece, had often leaue to goe to that Monastery, as well to heare the Seruice, as to see her Aunt, and learne of her to worke curious workes with the Needle, which shee much affected.

Shee was glad to see her brother so
well

well amended, and hauing made him
fit, and discoursing of his sickenesse, ſhee
blamed the ſtrictneſſe of her condition,
that had denied her the meane of viſi-
ting him as otherwiſe ſhee would haue
done, if the Lawes ſhee liued vnder
would haue permitted her. To which,
finding hee made no anſwere, but ſate
immoderately ſighing; ſhe added, cer-
tainely Brother, either it is your ſicke-
neſſe hath ſo ſtrangely altered you, that
I may ſay, I ſcarce know you, or you
haue ſomewhat in your minde, that you
will keepe to your ſelfe, that makes
you ſo melancholy, as may hazard the
caſting of you downe againe, if you
take not heede. You know there is no
disease more dangerous then that of the
minde, the Phyſitians haue no Receipt,
nor Apothecaries any Drugge, that
may auaille to heale it: the beſt thing for
it, is the aduice of a faithfull friend, and
where can you expect it more faithfull,
then

then from me, who you know have not onely loved you above my other Brothers, but even before my selfe. I beseech you by that inviolable, and more then sisterly love, make mee a partner of your sufferings; upon this assurance that you shall finde me secret, serviceable, and assisting you to all you can desire; despise not a vailed head, as an unprofitable thing that cannot give you comfort equall with others more conversant in the world. Deare sister (answered *Hipolito*) my affection to you is built vpon too sure a foundation to bee shaken, or indangered by any earthly accident, nor haue I euer doubted of the abilitie of your vnderstanding, but my despair of remedy to my affliction, takes from me all will to giue it you; forgiue me good Sister and since you can in nothing helpe, let me alone endure the Penance of my idle thoughts. How? (answered she) where

where is the resolution you men attribute to your selues about the courage of women? Certainly, your part of it is very little, that you dispaire of executing, before you attempt the means; if your owne inuention doe not presently giue you a smoothe way to your desires, you must not therefore thinke that others cannot finde it out for you, the fullest vnderstandings, in their owne affaires are distrustfull, and for feare of loosing themselves, doe often repaire to the faith of a friend for their resolution: If I can serue in nothing else but to keepe your griefes for you, it is no litle lightning to a heavy and oppressed heart, to leaue his vexations with those he knowes, wil affectionately imbrace all, to take but a part from him. The Principall effects of friendship, are helpe and consolation; though I bee vnusefull for the one, yet am I most fit for the other, and I hope able
for

for both. God often times raises the
meanes of our reliefe beyond our hope,
and from those we least expect it: deere
Sister (answered hee) out of the meere
dutie of my loue, and no hope at all of
any allay to my griefes; I will tell you
their subiect, which shame ought still
as much to conceale, as reuerence to
the lawes of Nature, should haue at first
forbidden. Know (deere Sister) I haue
beene so long engaged, that now in
despight of my best oppositions, I am
constrained to giue my selfe vp to the
loue of our Neece *Isabella*. This hath
beene, and is the occasion of my an-
guish and must so remaine as long as
my vnhappy fate shall allow mee life:
behold the laborinth of my paines, and
the little meanes I haue to get out, since
I am already gone on so farre. With
this he told her the discourse of all had
past betweene them, shewing her the
letters hee had writ, and her answers to
them.

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them: To which his Sister said, I finde now that one of the greatest faults that the Anciēts haue made in the picture of Loue, is in blinding his eyes, for though hee indifferently disperseth his shafts amongst all sorts of creatures, yet the eie was neuer against this effect, and in that respect they needed not haue blindfolded him, but this marke I see belongs better to those whom hee hath once touch't, and whom he leaueth not onely blinde in body, but euen estranged from all due considerations of the minde, so much as they remaine insensibly confused and lost in themselves without ability to make vse of their owne vnderstandings.

Oh how truely was it said of that Philosopher, that for the most part we make things difficult and impossible to our selues for want of courage to vndertake them! Make your selfe (Brother) iudge of this in your selfe, who
vpon

upon the first difficulty that affronts you in your designe, remaine astonish-
ed and confounded. You love a Lady
that is upon the point of marriage with
another. There are many marriages in-
tended, yet so crost, as they never ar-
rive to their consummation: & though
that must bee, yet were not that the
worst that might happen you; marri-
age often bringing convenience to
love. Next, you love one that you can-
not marry. Well, and hath love no o-
ther ends for his contentment, then
marriage? since it as often dissevers af-
fections as it joynes them, while being
subjected to the lawes of an obligation
and dutie, you disarme him of his chie-
fest forces. A wife (though never so
faire) is like a guest, or the raine that
becomes a trouble in three dayes.

But you will say, I love one whom
the lawes do forbid me both all desire
& all hope to enjoy, which so distracts
me

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me in this thornle way, as I am there ruined with the impossibilitie of getting out. You are not the first that haue vndertaken things as much forbidden, which haue yet attained to a happie end. Thinke vertue consists in great and difficult things, and is pleased in a resistance, and the more paine and difficultie there is in an affaire, the more glorie followes the enterprize, and pleasure the execution: the attempt may content you, whether you gather the desired fruits of your paines, or fall vnder an impossible enterprize, and where your fortune failes you, not your courage. In summe, you stand not in ill tearmes. I find in these Letters ground enough to build hope enough on: leaue the government of this businesse to me; it may bee I shall giue you a better account then you expect of it. Be you of good cheere, goe see your Mistresse, and procure her repaire hither vpon our *La-*
D *dies*

dies day to heare the Vespers, and faile not to bee here your selfe.

All these faire promises of the Nunne wrought little in her Brothers beleefe; onely they so farre restored him to himselfe, as that commending his loue to her care, with more affection then hee would haue done his life, he returned to his Brother the Notaries house till the next day after dinner, when hee went to see *Fabritio*, and, (vnder that pretence) his Daughter *Isabella*, where hee receiued the gladdest welcome from Brother, Sister, Neece, and Signiour *Pompeio* that might bee. That afternoone past in the discourse of his sickness, and how much euery one suffered for him. Euening being come, hee returned home, deferring the speech with his Neece till next day, which was our *Ladies* Eue, when he was to dine with his Brother *Fabritio*, and *Pompeio* should bee gone home. He then intreated

of *Hipolito and Isabella.* 35

red her to go the next day to the Nuns to Vespers, if she could get leave, which she easily obtained: her Mother in-law being sicke, and accompanied with an old Gentlewoman her neighbour. She carried with her onely her Maid *Iulsa*, in whom she wholly affied.

This commeditie gaue *Hipolito* a presage of his good fortune, and her the first danger of her ruine, whereof shee had some apprehension at her departure; for getting vp into the Coach, a weaknesse seized her, with a head-ache, and a cold sweat all over her bodie, and hauing been a while in the Coach, the Horses that vsed before times to be quiet enough, began to start, and rush one vpon the other, with such force and confusion as droue the Coachman into danger of his life, who had much a doe to bring them into order againe. These accidents not a little affrighted the vnderstanding of the vnfortunate

D 2

Ladie :

Ladie : but the force of our destinie violently driues vs to what is fatally ordained to vs ; so these things could nothing hinder her from the pursuit of her misfortunes, in spight of all the contradictions of either her feare, or reason.

Being arriued at the Nunnerie, shee found her Vncle and her Aunt walking together in a Garden, there attending her comming, who as soone as they had perceiued her, and seeing her paler then shee vsed to bee, her Aunt said to her ; Certainly Neece you haue not brought your best lookes hither, me thinks you are afraid of shaming my Brother, and therefore will partake with his sickly lookes. Then *Isabella* told them what had happened her in her coming, and occasioned that feare which perhaps her lookes had still retained.

Well then (said the Nunne) since ye are both of you ill at ease, my counsell is,

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is, that ye repose your selues, and dis-
pence with to daies deuotion. *Iulia*
and I will go heare the Vespers for you.
No good Aunt (said *Isabella*) I come
not here to see your Garden; I will go
heare seruice with you and I thinke my
Vncle is here for the same purpose too.
God will be no lesse pleased (answered
the Nunne) with your wills, and per-
haps more, then if ye did what might
preiudice your healths. The Diuines
say, that although in the affirmative
precepts of pietie one be not alwaies
busied in the action affirmative, yet that
the sight alone sufficeth: in precepts
negative, the troth is, we must be con-
uersant, and bent to the action nega-
tiue. Stay here, stay, I will take your
sinne vpon me; and with that went a-
way, carrying *Iulia* along with her.
Well Neece (said *Hipolito*) let vs stay
then, since it is my Sisters counsell, and
taking her by the hand, led her to sit

under a hanging rooſe covered with
Gellomines and Musk-Roſes, and gan
to ſpeak to her in this ſort.

If euer man had reaſon to praiſe Hea-
uen, it muſt be I, for the happineſſe I
now receiue in this meanes offered me,
to returne you my due humble thanks
for the honour of your Letters in my
ſickneſſe: and to vnfold the thoughts
of my ſoule to you; to the end that
comprehending them better then here-
tofore you haue ſuffered your ſelfe to
do, you will daine to receiue my griefes
and releiue them. I beſeech you then
take my words in that good part that
my affection deſerues, and with ſuch
pitie of my afflictions as your good-
neſſe ought to moue you to. I will not
importune you with the repetition of
any my former diſcourſes, you may
haue remembred enough to found your
determination vpon, and to know the
bounds of mine intentions ſo limi-
ted,

ted, as that I nor pretend, nor desire ought of you that is not in all honestie and honour permitted: nor more then a preheminance of affection, such as loue may stablish in a heart, that is, to giue the fruits to others, for whom they are by the superstition of our lawes, and their fauorable destinies more happily reserued. All I desire is, that as all my thoughts are dedicated and vowed to the seruice, honour, and loue of the heavenly ver tues of your soule, and all my wishes but to be acceptable to you; yours may so farre answer them, as to set all other friendship and affections behinde mine, & so farre distinguish my portion in you from other mens, as not to receiue them in comparison or equalitie with me. Pay me no more then for Gods sake with the loue of a Neece, which may be common to many more; and iudging aright of my deuotions, receiue them, since they tend not to

your prejudice, nor to any thing vn-lawfull or interdicted.

I had thought Vncle (answered *Isabella*) I had so satisfied you by my Letters, as you had remained as well content as you haue cause to bee, and that your reason had had the power to disperse those vaine fantasies that had clouded your iudgement; but for ought I see, the worke is new to begin: would to God I had beleued those presages that should haue diuerted me from coming to this place to enter anew into our wonted contestations. I know (Vncle) that all desires tend vnto the end of their contentment. You say that that of your loue is fixed vpon the soule, and those perfections which you make your selfe beleue mine is accompanied with. These are still for ought I can perceiue those first dissembled protestations, by which those that are seized with your passion, are woont to abuse

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abuse such as they finde easie of beleefe,
and within the bounds whereof they
determine not to keepe themselves: and
though there might bee found some
men so discreet as would bee content to
bee so limited, yet loue stil being be-
come their master, and hauing taken
from them all power of ruling and
bounding their will, and bowing it to
the appetites of the bodie (which is
most conuersant with vs) it soone wea-
ries the wit and spirit with the contem-
plation of things separated from huma-
nitie, and drawes it to the pursuit of
those delights and pleasures, to which
our senses and appetites doe leade vs.
Doe you not know that the brands or
Torches which they paint in *Cupids*
hands betoken his double and different
effects? for as the light of the fire plea-
seth the eyes, and reioyceth vs when we
behold it onely, and not feeble the heat
too neer vs; but when it comes to burne
vs,

vs, we suffer then the hurt of that thing that before so much delighted vs; euen so Love hath his beginnings pleasing, because he doth not at first possesse and take vp the discourse of our reason, and represents nothing to vs for a while but the sweetnesse of a felicitie and contentment which he sets before vs, and makes vs easily hope for: but when hee hath once seized vs wholly, as hee takes his possession, hee dazels vs with the alluring appearances of his pleasures, and putting vs into the midst of his flame, melts and makes to waste from vs al the freedome of our reason and iudgement that wee had before. It were better therefore (good Vncle) you draw back the first foot you haue set into it, before the other follow it, and faile you too, and not to desire of me what I can neither giue, nor you ought to pretend vnto. You know I am vpon the point of marriage: if ill hap discouer your addresses,

addresles (as time if you perseuere cannot long hide them) you not onely ruine this my fortune, which brings mee profit, if not contentment, but with it my reputation; and be assured, if I giue you not a most ample content, it is not want of will but power.

This discourse which *Hipolito* beleeued to come from a sincere truth, and not mingled with dissimulation, sent him backe to his old feuer, and made him speake thus. Neece, why should you not conceiue my loue rather placed betweene *Hercules* and *Mercury*, that is, betweene Reason and Courage, as ancient Academies haue painted him, then betweene voluptuous pleasure and vnfaithfulnesse, where you seate him? Why, will you not allow him vertue for his obiect, before a base lust, and which you forbid me too? Why, will you rather thinke me wicked and false then such as I am, and you haue reason
to

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to iudge me? I could easily answer the scrupulous ceremonies of law with which you combat me. The holy Bible offers mee examples of such, and things much farther in neerenesse of alliance. The force of loue is diuine, and may iustifie vs against all ciuill or Ecclesiasticall ordinances. But I will not goe so farre, nor alter the stile of my first language, or ouerthrow your marriage, much lesse your reputation. I haue enough protested, but since so vnprofitably, I finde death must end my loue, and despaire; and I hope it will not bee long first: I shall not bee alone vnhappy, when like *Timageres* you happily will too late repent the ruine of your *Miletus*, and so reuenge vpon your owne selfe your crueltie. In speaking this, the teares fell from his eies, and drew as many from *Isabella*.

As they were taken new heart and speech, the Nanne returned from her
short

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short Vespers, and at the entrance of the Garden (to bee freed from *Julia*) gaue her her Psalter, to deliuer her Maid, willing them to prouide some collation. And comming to her Brother and Neece, a little smiling, quoth she: how now sweet hearts, I am affraid you haue spent this time ill you are both so sad, make mee a partner of your entertainments: though I be not so cunning as you worldlings, yet I am not such an innocent as my habit speakes me, I haue bookes ye know of other vse then to the Church; nor am I altogether vnpractized in any thing; feare not to giue me your discourse, for should it be euen of Loue, I might be able to put in a word.

Of Loue Aunt (answered *Isabella*) the deuotions and walls of a Cloister allow it no entrance.

What (answered the Nunne) can you that haue read so much bee ignorant

rant of his effects, in the Temple of *Anubis*, in *Saturnes* Temple at *Alexandria*, or how little the strict guard of *Danae*, *Leda*, and many others, could preuent the powerfull workings of this God? There is nothing that his brands cannot fire, or his arrowes pierce; and I had ill spent my time in the house of your dead Mother, who was the woman I loued best in this world, and whose memory I doe most honour, if I had learned nothing of this.

My Mother Aunt (answered *Isabella*) what can you say of her? I was not so blest as to see her in an age fit to iudge of her conditon, but sure she died with a more faire and vnquestioned reputation, then (if her life and manners had not thoroughly deserued it) this age would haue given her.

Neece (answered the Nunne) nothing vndoth vs but indiscretion: your Mother was happie in placing her fa-
uours

uours vpon a wise and respectfull Gentleman, and thee of her part was in nothing vnwarie. This preserved her, and will keepe vp the honour and happinesse of all that ioyne it with their loue. I will giue you the whole truth, for I saw it.

The yeare I was profest Nunne (it is some eightene yeares since) the Marquesse of *Coria* was sent to this Towne in businesse of his Maiesties; hee stayd here some seuen or eight moneths, bestowing the time his great employments left him in the noblest exercises, and most worthy his qualitie; hee was some five and thirty yeares old, and the most accomplished man that I euer saw. The Lords and Gentry to doe him honour, made him many feasts, and there alwayes followed Balls, Masques, Comedies, and other pleasurable pastimes, in which he would againe returne his thanks to them. He tooke much pleasure

sure in Masques, for the privilege it gaue him of discoursing with Ladies. My eldest Brother was the man of this Towne he most affied in, and to whom he did most freely impart his negociation; my Sister the woman that pleased him best, finding her excellently faire, well graced, of a pleasing discourse, and an vnderstanding aboue the rest. This inclination grew to a loue, in which hee gouerned himselfe so well, and so well disguised it, that hee escaped all suspition. He resolved to impart it to my Sister, but with such fittesse as none but shee, or some most trusted woman should know it. And knowing the common curiosity and sudden suspitions that ordinarily follow neere frequentations in those kinds, might soon ruine his hopes, he retained still his ordinary modest fashion and seemings. But the Carnevall drawing nere, the Masques and dances were also more frequent,

frequent, and gaue him more conueni-
ence to speake to her, and entertaine her
as hee did ; yet so disguised, as though
hee was knowne to bee in the troope,
yet hee was vnknowne to all but her, to
whom (finding, or presuming, that she
was not displeased, hee should make
more estimation of her then the rest)
hee gaue a signe to know him by,
which made the meanes of his ap-
proaches more easie. And after hauing
enough by generall and doubtfull
words, giuen her the chiefe end and
aime of his desires, at last, hee reuealed
himselſe wholly to her.

To be short, his discretion so mana-
ged his affaire for him, as that helpe
with the force of his vertue and noble-
nesse, (and the seruice of my Sisters
Nurce, whom hee found meanes to
gaine, and make the messenger of his
letters) hee led my Sister to such com-
position, as that (conuenience and safe-

ric permitting) shee gaue him promise of sight, and speech with her in more privacy. Such as are practised in *Italy* and *Spaine*, vnderstand well enough, what such permissions doe promise to those that women haue a will to fauour. To bring this to passe, there happened a very fit meane; which was the necessity of an affaire of import for the Kings seruice, wherein hee was to send to *Rome* out of hand to his Holinesse. The Marquesse (and the Councell by his aduice) iudged my Brother fitter then any other for this purpose; whereupon, soone as the Carnenall was ended, my brother made that voyage, where hee was five or six weekes; in which time, the Marquesse taking the occasion, found meanes to visit my Sister by night, following her permission, which stretcht at length euen to the point, whither they say loue pretends; with such continuance as that
euery

every second night he visited her, without ever having bin discovered by any but my Sisters Nurce, who lay in her Chamber, and I in her inner Chamber, by reason of a sicknesse I had, that made me leaue the Monastery a while, to bee the better tended in my Brothers house? And, who not being yet thoroughly recovered, slept not so soundly, but I sometimes heard soft noises of doores, and murmures of words, which put me into a little suspicion, with some other things that I had already beene imployed about, which kept mee still in doubt: In such sort, as one day I cast out a word to my sister; who so rebuked me, that I neuer after durst speake any more to her of it.

But neere vpon the time that my Brother was expected backe againe; shee offered occasion of speech with mee to that purpose, expressly coniuering mee to harbour no such opinions

in my fantasie, and not to frame any false and iniurious tales of her. I that loued, and honoured her more then any other thing, and had all the obligation of nature, and loue from her to make mee doe so: gaue her all the assurances that shee could desire, of what shee commanded mee, telling her by way of discourse what I had seene here, which so satisfied her, seeing I had both ingaged my selfe, and had besides a little knowledge of the world; as she promised mee, if time gaue her prooffe of the faith I profest her, shee would one day speake more freely to me, then yet shee would, as afterward shee did, which ye shall here.

But first ye must know, that my Brother being returned, this practise betwene them ceased, not their loues; but vertue was of both sides so reciprocally obeyed, as their pleasure, nor desire, had not the power to carry them

them beyond the limits of respect, nor had they other commerce then by letters, and those but seldome. Not long after Easter, the Marquesse hauing dispatcht the affaires hee had in charge, was called home by the King his Master, which summons, honour, and duty both commanded him to obey. You may imagine, what an affliction was this eternall separation, both of them despairing euer to see one another againe.

I will onely adde this for one of the rarest, and most notable examples of discretion, and constancy in them both, that I thinke hath beene euer scene vpon the like occasion: that in a feast which the Signory of the towne made him before his departure, whither the Ladies were inuited, and among the rest my Sister, whom he led in the *gran-ballo*, or Measures, and in whose pauses, or times of rest, this sad subiect serued

E 3

them

them for entertainment, that neither there, in taking their leaues, nor here in this place where hee saw her afterwards (as if it had beene by chance, comming to bid our Abbessle farewell) none could euer by either of their faces, or gestures, perceiue any alteration in their mindes, or any appearance so differing from their accustomed fashion, as might giue any the least suspition of the truth. He being gone, and my Sister big with child, and drawing neere her time, she came hither to see me, and tooke of me the greatest assurances she could deuise of secrecie, of what I should receiue from her. Which I haue hitherto most inuiolably kept; and should still, had not this occasion pluckt it from me, besides that, yee and I owe an equall respect vnto her memory, and all other danger is long since past. Shee spake to me in this sort.

Sister, you may remember, when my
husband

of Hipolito and Isabella. 55

husband was imployed to *Rome*, wee had speech together of a conceipt you had then taken; and I promised, so you would haue patience for the present, I would hereafter talke more freely to you. The occasion is now come, that (hauing had many testimonies of your loue, though peraduenture, your youth might giue cause to question your discretion) I shall repose my selfe vpon the assurances, and trials that I haue had of your affection in the thing that more concernes mee then my life; assuring my selfe, it cannot light into more faithfull, more fit, or more safe hands than into yours.

Then she relates to mee, the lones of the Marquesse and her, and how the childe, with which shee was then great was his, as hee knew, and not my Brothers; but because shee was not about three weekes gone with child before my Brothers returne, it was easie to con-

ceale it. Neuerthelesse, shee desired the
Marquesse should know (as was agreed
betweene them) what issue her great
belly should come to : which shee de-
termined herselfe to doe, if God gaue
her life, but if it pleased him by her
death, to deprive her of the meanes,
shee desired me to discharge this office,
and to this purpose ; three dayes after
she should be brought a bed, a Pilgrime
should come, faining to bee returned
from *Ierusalem*, bringing images, and
other things of deuotion, and should
aske almes to make his voyage to *Saint
Ieques in Spaine* ; whom you shall find
meanes (saide shee) to take into your
chamber, and giue him this little coffer,
whereof this is the key : there is in it a
Iewell, his picture, and his letters, at
the bottome of one of which you shall
write a sonne, or a daughter, according
as I shall be deliuered, and you shall so
discharge him without more words to
him.

him. If I die, you shall be freed of this trouble, and shall only keepe this boxe, which shee opened, and read his letters to mee, the best written I thinke, that euer were scene; the Iewell was this Diamond, which you haue so much desired, and I haue euer promised you: she gaue it mee at her death, in presence sence of my Brother, to keepe for you till your marriage.

Now you must note, that the Mar-quesse was to send some one of trust to *Naples*, about the time of my Sisters lying in; who clad like a Pilgrime, should temporize, and dissemble him- selfe for a time, in all but the place, where hee was certainly to bee found out, by those hee should bee sent vnto from, though he knew them not. God would that soone after his arrivall, she was deliuered of you, Neece, so happily, as shee had the meanes to see him dispatch her selfe. But she left the coffer
with

with mee still, which I kept till her death, shee commanded mee to burne within a while after, all that was within it (as I did) and gaue me the Iewell (as I haue told you) the which my Brother beleued, she had had of her Brother the Bishop of *Ostia*, when she went to see him on his death-bed, a little before her being with child of you.

Behold the truth of the History, to which, I sweare to you, I haue added nothing of my owne, but deliuered the simple truth of all as it past; being one of the seldomest scene, and rarest passages carried in this kinde, that I thinke hath beene lightly heard, or reade of; and by relation, wherof I hope I shall not haue diuerted, or flakt either of you in the offices of that amity, which the mutuall opinions of your neere alliance each to other hath ingendered betweene you: and wherein (though yee may in truth discover

couer the mistaking of your beleeves hitherto) yet your vertues I know will smoothe ouer greater errours, for the honour of your house, and the memory of so worthy a woman as she was.

Isabella through this discourse, faining to bee much displeased with her Aunt, said to her; pardon me (Aunt) if I bate you a little of the respect I bore you, to the end to giue the cinders of my dead Mother their due; which command mee to tell you that I hold the story you haue told, as repugnant to truth, as all those that haue knowne her, haue euer iudged her actions conformable and obedient to vertue. And you cannot more plainly forbid mee your conuersation, then by defaming the honour of one I owe so much to as a Mother.

No, no Neece, (said the Nunne) I pray you doe not thinke I haue discoursed any thing to you that is not
most

most true, or haue spoken at all to offend you, or blemish the honour of my dead Sister, in the reuerence whereof (though you bee her Daughter) you shall neuer exceed me. Twas by chance I fell into this discourse, and vpon the occasion your words gaue me, and vpon that assurance that ought to bee betwixt vs, which I imagined too great to haue suffered any such distrusts to haue slept betweene vs. The experience that the world and more yeeres may giue you, will shew you, that such, and stranger accidents than these, are nothing impossible : Although I must confesse, if I had imagined it would haue so much offended you, I had withheld my selfe from speaking any thing of this matter.

I would not Sister (said *Hipolito*) for the better halfe of my life but you had brought me this v unexpected quier, and drawne me out of the conflict my soule
was

of Hipolito and Isabella. 61

was in, and rebellion against mee, and my destinies against all my dearest desires, nay, against Heaven it selfe, for hauing plunged mee into a gulse of misery so deepe, as no other thing but the remedie this your discourse may prepare for me, can deliuer me out of.

Behold (answered the Nune) to what passe I am come; for my owne part, I hold you both deare, and loue you with so equal an affection, as I cannot make any distinction between you, and hauing at once pleased the one, and offended the other, I am as much afflicted with that distast, as glad of the others contentment. But had I knowne the occasion of these contrary motions, perhaps my small vnderstanding had prompted mee to haue so fitly spoken, that I had remained equally accepted of you both.

I pray Aunt (said *Isabella*) let vs leaue this ill subiect; tis not onely to you
Neece

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Neece

Neece (said shee:) but to me deare Goddess (answered *Hipolito*) who proposing to my selfe from hence all my happinesse, will beleue that my Sister is miraculously false vpon this discourse, to draw back my life not from the graue, but (which is worse) from the for-euer languishing griefes, whither the mischiefe of my desperate condition was leading mee. Then began he to discourse anew of his loues, as if he had not yet imparted them to the Nunne, who the better to giue the last accomplishment to this worke, had sent word that her Neece was to sup with her, and that the Coach should not await her returne till the euening. She obserued well the Maids countenance during *Hipolitos* discourse, and beleued her heart meant him no ill, though shee often interrupted him, as desirous they should beleue the contrarie: in the end shee enforced her selfe to this speech.

Was

Was it not enough that you had digrest so much from what you ought, as to haue followed the direction of so vnreasonable an opinion, and so farre presumed as to haue thus often importuned mee, but that you must now be transported beyond the limits of modestie and your owne honour, in daring to lay open all this to her, before whom the least thought of it should make you blush? I beseech you bee satisfied with my patience, and your own impudence, without going farther.

The Nunne beleeuing shee said this rather forced then heartily, interrupted her, saying, (Neece) scornes doe not alwaies sit well vpon modest women, nor ought they to light indifferently vpon all those that offer them their seruice: The honestie, birth, wit, iudgement, good fashion, with other faire parts and vertues of such as possesse them, ought to commend & make them
more

more acceptable then others, lesse remarkably accomplisht ; and shee that should not make this difference, must deserue to be thought without iudgement or vnderstanding. You are not of that number ; and the especiall communication of your friendship with my Brother, shewes in what ranke you hold him. And now that you haue occasion to iudge his, to you greater then euer, and more compleat ; since his parts heretofore made you esteeme him worthy your fauour, why must the increase and perfection of his loue bee the diminution and end of yours ? restore your selfe to your selfe, and doe not a thing so vnlike you ; doe not (sweet Neece) make him miserable, whom you haue euer knowne honest and worthy of loue ; nor pay the debt of the faithfull seruice hee hath vowed to you, with a lesse fauourable vsage then you were content to allow him when you owed him

of *Hipolito* and *Isabella*. 65

him selfe *Isabella*, though she made shew that these discourtes displeased her, and that she beleued the tale of her Mothers loues to be but a cunning imposture of her Aunts, to draw her to her Brothers desires, neuerthelesse this serued for the first excuse of their loues, and to cleare the of those difficulties which till now had diuided them; for in the end, led by her destinies, woone by her Aunts perswasions, with the oaths and assurances shee gaue her of the truth of her relation, and by the teares and coniurations of *Hipolito*, but chiefly by the force of loue, shee yeelded her selfe wholly to his power: for alas, how can a silly Maid maintaine her libertie against him who subdues all whom he will, and euen when he will to his yoke and subjection.

At last then, after such ceremonies as likely passe in things of this kinde, *Hipolito* is receiued by *Isabella* for her seruant,

uant, with such contentment as onely those may imagine who haue incoun-
tered the like happie successes, but with
condicion that his loue should be still
confined within those discreet limits he
had before offered, without forcing her
permission farther then her looks and
speech should giue him cause to hope.
These are leaues with which many co-
uer the workings of their loues, to giue
the more glosse to the colours of their
intentions. But hee willingly receiues
that law which inables him to make a
greater, and he who desires to haue a
victorie, imbraces it vpon any conditi-
ons ; vnder the hope, that being once
master, his obedience lies in his owne
hands. All this poore Maid could de-
sire, was sworne and promised by her
Vncle, with all the assurances could be
giuen. So hauing suppt, and the Coach
being come, they tooke their leanes of
the Nunne, with many thanks for the
casie

case meane she had giuen them to establish their contentments, promising each to other an often meeting in that or other alike conuenient place. Some happy dayes they enioyed to the full of their wishes ; but as all things are subject to mutability, so neither could this happinesse long subsist without some feeling of the inconstancy of fortune.

Fabritio presseth his Daughter to her marriage, beleeuing her Vncle his Brother no small part of the cause of the coldnesse of her inclination to it ; thereupon he resolues to send him to *Padua*, to confirme those noble parts his education had begun in him, and tels him this his resolution ; laying before him his youth, and how much it was yet too early to retire himselfe, and put an end to so faire beginnings, that it behooued him to go yet further to exceed the vulgar ; that his fortune was

to bee built vpon extraordinary merits, since his owne meanes were not great; and that onely for so good purposes he should make vse of him, as of one that euer would reckon him one of his; and that though at *Naples* there was no want of honest exercises, yet they had not letters, the chiefe ornament and perfection of a Gentleman: besides, that the place of our birth is neuer so fit for our education as another.

Hipolito surprised with this vnexpected newes, was vnprovidid of an answer, yet neither accepteth nor refuseth it, but found some pretence to delay the time for a few daies. In the end, his duty, his honour, his reason, and the reuerence hee bore his Brother, made him consent; but his desire, his passion, his loue and contentment contradicted it: amid these doubts he went to aduise with his Sister the Nunne, where hauing long weighed al these considerations

of Hipolito and Isabella. 69

tions, and finding that the respect and honour of his Mistresse, was too strong for any other argument for his stay, and the many accidents that might crosse their contentments being to bee feared; besides, that his Brother the Notarie, of whom hee depended, and who began a little to suspect this businesse, had absolutely told him, that if he would euer hope for any thing from him, hee was out of hand to obey the appointment of their elder Brother, which was for his good and aduancement; and that if he voluntarily reiected the well wishes of his friends, hee should finde himselfe abandoned of them, and of all the hope of his fortunes. The Nunne (on the other side) perswaded him, that the yeelding to his Brothers, besides that it might bee to him a step to his better fortune, would bee a no lesse principall safety for the communication of his, and his Mistres-

ses desires, it being hard, and almost impossible, that the first heat of their loves could be so cunningly couered, but that some flames would be perceined, that it was not for him to hope to interrupt her marriage, and though he could, yet that hee should rather helpe it forward, as the fittest meane to establish their happinesse, gaining thereby the liberty to see, haunt, and communicate each with other, with all the priuacy they could desire; that it was to bee feared, that time might open the eyes of Signiour *Fabritia*, and his Wife, to see more then they would they should, that after this marriage these feares would cease, their actions being no more subiect to so much overlooking, the suspicion of the occasion of those hinderances being taken away.

Hipolito at length concluded vpon his iourney to *Padua*, and that a while after *Isabella* should consent to the marriage

of Hipolito and Isabella. 71

riage, without shewing any greater easinesse than before, to remoue all surmise of her Vncles being any cause of her former backwardnesse: without staying then till *Fabritio* should presse him againe, his Brother of himselfe vrges him for the meanes to accomplish his will, promising him so well to employ his time and expence, as should giue him contentment; this *Fabritio* receiues gladly.

The day before his departure, hee met his *Isabella* at the Nunnery; there did their approaching separation giue all passage of both sides to those griefes, teares, and sad complaints, that the violence of a mutuall Loue passion might raise in the young heat of these Louers affection; there was Fortune hewen, and their Destinies accused of too excessive a cruelty, for bringing on them so sudden a night of parting, euen in the morning of their warme affecti-

ons. After that their Eyes, Voyces, Lippes, and Armes, had done their mutuall offices, and that the Nunne had comforted them, with the assurance of her continuall assistance; they confirmed againe the promises of their Lones, with the strong pledges of all the solemnest Oathes they could deuise, inuoking all the execrations, and miseries that Heauen, and Hell could lay vpon either of them that should faile in the least point, with protestation, that what euer other vow they should make repugnant to these (which againe, and againe, they repeated) should not bee by voluntary consent, but forced and constrained: and thereupon went and heard Masse together.

To the end, to write with more safety each to other, they resolved *Hipolito* should inclose his letters within those hee should write to the Nunne, who
should

should giue them to *Isabella*, and returne him againe their answer. They coniuured one another also, to beare the anguish of their absence with patience, and so to command themselves at parting, as no appearance of either side, should breed any suspicion of their affection : which they did fitly enough ; for *Hipolito* found meanes to speake to his Brothers, and take leaue of them, and his Sisters in the absence of his Neece, whom afterward he met, as by chance, going to her Chamber, and there tooke his leaue of her with little stay. Shee tooke onely leisure to intreat him, that shee might see him before her marriage, which she promised to send him word of.

He was no sooner at *Padua*, which was in September, but hee caused to bee made a Mirhor of Chrystall of the Rocke conered with gold, and in that his picture inclosed, the inside of the
couer

couer was sealed vp with their cifer, or marke, which was in this forme (SS.) Without of one side was a Heart in the middest of a fire kindled by the beames of a Sunne, and blowne by a Cupid, with these wordes written about it ; *Puro ardet & uno* : of the other side, was a burning Fire ascending vpward, and Teares showring on it, with these words ; *Nec lachrymis, nec mergitur undis* : and sent it by his Lacquey disguised, directing it to the Nunne, with this letter following.

I Have beene ever of opinion, that the passions of Love had their effects much more approaching to extremes, than all others, and their fruits farre above imagination, and discourse. The deere prooffe that now I haue, assures mee of it. I haue as yet onely tasted the pleasure one receiues in the sight of what hee truly loves, and thereby doe guesse at
tha

of Hipolito and Isabella. 75

the perfection of that contentment which
possession yeelds. But I am at the pre-
sent, so thoroughly afflicted with the pri-
uation of both the one and the other, as
none but he that fees it can imagine, nor
though hee felt could expresse it. Yet I
doe digest it with such patience, as it
pleases the welcome necessity of so rare,
and worthy a subiect to lay on me, willing
to liue in sufferance, or rather to begge a
languishing life of so beloued a remem-
brance, as is the representation of your
faire Idea, assuring my selfe you will not
altogether banish mine from your eyes,
but bee pleased to entertaine likewise the
memory of that seruant of yours, who
wil be euer so much yours, as heauen shal
as soone be false, as he unfaithfull: and
doe not you (O my dearest) whose pure
Soule, hath never produced action of
crime, to these other base and common
ones, but like it selfe spotlesse, and noble,
doe not you I (beseech you) suffer it to
fall

fall under the ordinary effects of time, and absence ; but line pleased to love him, who will line adoring you, and from the heat of whose affection you have already inkindled, and raised those flames, which neuer can be extinct, or abated.

This letter being received by the Nunne, was forthwith deliuered together with the present to *Isabella* ; whom now *Pompeio* visited with more frequency then euer, being assured by his Father in law, and his Mother, that he should marry her before the Carniuall next ; the troublesome importunities of these Parents, redoubled the griefe the young maid fels for the absence of her *Hipolito*.

At the ease she found, was in those often deuotions she made at the Nunnery with her good Aunt, by whose heple, she caused to bee made her picture, by an excellent Painter in a small Ouall, and
got

got it inclosed in a little Enameld boxe of gold, vpon one side of which there were two Cupids painted, holding each in the one hand their Bow, and in the other, a Crowne of Palmes, which they held aloft ; as for reward of him that shot best, and written about, *Nen-trisef ntrique* ; and on the other side, were their Cifers ioyned, made of opposed Shafts, inclosed within a Chaplet of Myrtle, and Pomgranate, and about it, *Non nisi mutuis confodi potuere sagittis* : which she sent to Hipolito, by him that had brought his letter, with this answer.

IF the effects of our desires were subiect to no contradiction, and Fortune were alwayes obedient to our wils, the glory not onely of our actions, but of vertue it selfe would be defaced, the pleasure of our hope lost, and that of our enioying abated, and diminished. Certainly, all things

things whatsoever must confesse themselves indebted to their contraries; because by the opposition of the one, the perfection of the other is onely best knowne. Think then that the sharpnesse of this absence, which our disaster makes us now feele, is but to relish to vs the better the sweetnesse of each others presence, when Heaven shall favour vs to enioy it, & which we are not to feare will be long interdicted vs. But being I doe no lesse lovingly await the one, than I lothly abide the other: I will vow to you, that I should esteeme my selfe most happy, if I could bee suffered but to enioy the liberty of my loanenesse with peace. But behold the misery of my condition, being not daily, but hourly drawne, or rather haled by force, to the satisfaction of the lothsome, and vnpleasing importunities of my tormenters; to whose subiection the tyranny of my fate hath too vniustly reserved mee. So as in this continuall

warre,

of Hipolito and Isabella. 79

warre, with my nature and desires, I live
so artificiall, and forced a life, as I scarce
understand my selfe: but beare it, for-
ming to my selfe by such faining, some
little ease (and all that is left mee)
from the affliction of my lues houres:
Live assured of my vowes, which I will
keepe inuiolable to you; and as I haue
beene the first cause that your heart hath
felt the force of Loves fire, be likewise as-
sured, you shall be the first, and alone that
shall ever embrace me.

They continued all they could the
commerce of their letters; in the meane
time, Signior *Fabritio* wanted no coun-
sailers to perswade his daughter, what
happinesse this marriage with *Pompeio*
did promise her: Shee finding which
course was her best to hold, made shew
of more good liking towards him then
aforetimes, the which gaue great con-
sentment to Signior *Fabritio* and Li-
via,

nia, who now esteeming her wholly reclaimed to their wills, made her acquainted with their desire of the dispatch of her Marriage, presently after the end of the Christmas holy-dayes: Shee that alwayes beleeued it should haue beene deferred till the end of the Carnevall, (for feare of being surprised) writ to *Hipolito* this letter following .

You haue alwayes promised me, and I haue presumed on it, that I should haue the happinesse to see you before the dayes of my sacrifice. Now knowing they are to be hastened, and that presently after these holy-dayes, I must into my fetters; I haue found the meanes to acquaint you with this sad newes, whose elements, I hope you will preuent with your promise. To this I doe summon you, beseech you, coniure you by the obligation of your word, by the duty of your love, by the assurance you haue of mine, by the
holy

of Hipolito and Isabella. 81

holy oaths we have made, and by that respect and reverence you owe to those diuine powers, which our inuocation made our witnesses. You owe my misfortunes this consolation, because the hope of your contentment in it was not the first, but onely cause of my consenting to this match. I will not feare you will by refusing this my first request, giue mee so iust occasion to distrust your affection because you owe it; it lies in your power, to doe it, I desire it, and there needes but your will, to the accomplishment of your due, and my satisfaction.

This letter was safely deliuered to Hipolito, which more afflicted him, then if it had brought him the doome of his death. And, but that hee knew it madnesse to oppose what he could not hinder (and though he could, it might bee his destruction) hee had to his vttermost laboured to haue crost it: but

G

h e e

hee yeelded in his resolution to necessity, and conuenience, and sent this answer.

They are weake and cold affections, that neede so much chafing, and remembrance of their duties, and not those who by their owne feelings are enough disposed; it is not from these things that I would giue you the estimation of my obedience, but by the hazard, of as many liues if I had them, as I would wish there might be dayes betwene this and the accomplishment of what you enforme mee, since Heauen shewes it selfe so intentiue to my ruine, as to hasten so much the time of your appointed Marriage, we must inure his bitter lawes. But if it meane absolutely to triumph over my happinesse, it must suddenly breake off the course of my life: For that onely shall deny me the blisse of your sight almost with this letter which leaues mee as full of griefes.

of Hipolito and Isabella. 83

griefes, as I wish you may bee ever of contentment.

By good hap the Post of Naples was then at Padua, who had brought letters and money to *Hipolito* from his Brothers, and by whom hee returned them answere, which gaue him the fitter commodity to steale his iourney without being discovered. Hee went disguised during the Christmas hollydayes, and by bywayes got to *Naples*, where hee arriued late in the euening, and without being knowne to any one, found the way the next morning to the Nunnery, where hee lay concealed for the space of eight or tenne dayes in his Sisters Chamber; in which time *Isabella* (who quickly heard of it) had but three times the meanes to see him; and then caused certaine workes to bee made there, which was the pretext of her visitations. During the two last

whereof, the good and discreet Nunne left them alone in her Cabinet two or three houres, where they imployed the time about (you may imagine what) rather than to looke on pictures. For so was it fit, and reasonable, that the deere and last gage of the confirmation of a loue arriued to his perfection, should bee reserued for him, whose merit and affection might best claime it ; not for one that had but the shadow given him by the blind tyranny of fate.

A little after Twelſe day, because the time of her marriage drew neere, and his longer stay, could not bee but incommodious and dangerous ; hee prepared for his departure, and after hauing anew repeated their old oathes and assurances, and giuen each other fresh witnesses of the affections of their soules, by all sorts of lamentable complaints, that may bee occasioned by so displeasing a separation, (which they could

could not leave off till Teares, Words, and Time failed them) he left her.

Shortly after, and almost as soone as *Hipolito* was arriv'd at *Padua*, the long promised Nuptials of *Pompeio* and *Isabella* were dispatcht, with the honour of much great and noble company, Combats, Races for prizes, Masques, and other pleasures vsuall in such occasions.

He that had well obserued *Isabellas* lookes that day, (howsoeuer she might dissemble them) would haue iudged that what shee did then, was more by constraint, than out of her wils election. This alteration (apparant sometimes in her teares, which yet she stroue to hide) was by such as perceiued it, attributed rather to the apprehension she might haue of the change of her condition (which often troubles in such occurrences, the chaste hearts of yong maides) than to the true cause, which

none knew of. The dancing being ended, the Bride led into her Chamber and vndrest, and the women that accompanied her, departed, shee retired into her inner Chamber, where in despite of her best resolution, the force of her teares overbare the strongest opposition her reason could make. Detesting with sobbing, and broken complaints, the faults shee made against her faith to *Hipolito*, and the more shee sought to curbe her passion, the more violent it grew, so as in this conflict, she was halfe distracted. In the end comming a little more to her selfe, shee tooke paper, and bade her maid bring her handkercher, faining that her nose bled, to excuse her long stay; and in the meane time opened a veine so well to her purpose, as she had blood enough to write this letter to *Hipolito*.

Since

Since my teares are not able to write
 my griefes, my blood shall, and I
 would these were my last drops, that I
 might die as innocent in my actions, as
 I will for ever live constant in the sincer-
 ity of my will towards you. Which will
 is so contrary to what I am forced to, as
 that (but for being your command) I
 would sooner have consented to my
 death, and though the offence might bee
 excused through my constraint, yet ne-
 verthelesse the extremity that forces mee
 to the fault I commit against you, and
 against my selfe, will never bee able to
 serve mee for remedy against the incur-
 able ulcer that I make in my soule, in be-
 ing able to suffer that any other should
 be partaker of that which is onely due to
 you, and that (as consenting to the vi-
 ctory of mine enemy) I should yeeld my
 selfe to him for his prey and trophy. I
 go then, no, rather I am dragg'd to a
 loathed

loathed bed. Why did not my Destinies rather ordaine my life for a bleeding sacrifice vpon the altar of Diana, then to slave it to the tyrannous seruitude of these vnworthy hands? from the which (if you will not) I now death must bee ere long the meanes of my deliuerance.

She had only the leifure to end and seal this Letter, when her Mother who had staid all that while in her Chamber, came to take her to bed, and found her binding vp her hand, which shee fained to haue hurt by mischance. Shee see in her face so sad and full of teares, imputed it to the anguish of her hurt, and to the apprehension that Maids usually haue of their first nights endurings. But when shee was to go to bed, her teares brake out anew, and her Mother finding her vnwillingnesse so great, as shee could hardly in a long time draw her out of that inward Chamber where she

she was, sent for her Father, and said much to him that witness her griefe to finde things in so ill tearmes, and that this marriage was ingaged beyond the recovery of repentance. At length she was put to bed, not without the pittie of all about her, and beleefe that onely her word was forced, not her will gained to this marriage : and had her Husband vnderstood any thing, hee might easily haue perceiued in bed how the world went ; but hauing no sight but in his eyes, hee could see no farther than their object. Hee suffered scornfull refusals euen till morning, when he receiued it for a great fauour, to receiue but a kisse.

Some daies after the Carnevall this solemnity lasted, and then *Pompeio* and *Isabella* were honourably conducted to their owne house, where his chiefest abode was before. A little after, the Nunne that had conuayed
Isabella

Isabellas letter to Hippolito, received, and
sent her this following answer. of shew

quid boni, pariter illi omni agniti boni

THis is not a goodly example, that
may teach us, that things which
haue their beginnings reposed from the
vulgar, and differing from the ordinary
tract of the world, haue their consequen-
ces so rare and seldome scene, that our
ignorance to prevent them, and the diffi-
culty of finding out the remedies,
would rather take from whom they con-
cerne, all will to pursue them, then give
them any hope of their attaynement.
But since vertue shines most in the most
difficult things, and the more things
seeme impossible, the more their execu-
tion is worth the compassing. Let vs
(deere soules) stoop, but not sinke under
the burthen of these afflictions, death is a
possible and easie remedy for all, since we
haue it when wee list in our owne power.
But as it were the end of our present mi-
series,

of Hipolito and Isabella. 91

series, so would it be the priuation of our future happinesse. That then, must bee our latest refuge, when desperate of enjoying the one, mee may thereby escape the other. Shall we throw our selues at the feet of misfortune? if we must conclude there, let mee make my rhine memorable by the faire markes I shall leaue of the power loue hath in a resolved breast. Leave me the care of what remaines, for you haue for your part but too well discharged your duty, since all the honor of our loue hath hitherto been yours; and hauing no other merit to answer it with, it is fit that all the sinns should be mine. But wee both feele that part too much: Bee not you weary still to loue mee, assuring your selfe my seruice shall for euer accompany the faith of mine affection, patience my misfortune, and it may bee a happy euent my enterprises. Of which I hope at Easter to come and aduise with you.

These

These Letters gaue *Isabella* some comfort, whose sorrowes neither the great feasting, entertainments, visitations of kindred, friends and neighbours, the commodities of a pleasant and rich house, nor all the fondnesse of her new Husband could any whit diminish; so much her minde laboured with the impatience of lone and desire, with the absence of her *Hipolito*, and with the displeasure she took at the fault she accused her selfe of, hauing made against him. In this time *Hipolito* sent his elder Brother word that hee would visit him at *Easter*, who now hauing married his Daughter, was indifferent for his Brothers returne: and he hauing receiued a leaue, came two daies before *Easter*; and the day after, came *Pompeio* and his Lady thither. The ioy and contentment of these louers at their meeting was so great, as bred them no little pain to dissemble it: *Isabella* sayning such a welcome

come to her Vncle, as if his comming had beene vndreamt of, and vnexpected. They were there together eight or ten dayes without opportunity of any privacy, but once, because she could not go now as before without company to the Nunnery.

In this time *Hipolito* vsing the fittest carriage for the time and quality of his loue, addrest himselfe so well to his Nephew, and so woon his affection, as no mans company was so pleasing and acceptable to him as his. After that, *Pompeio* and his Lady went home to their owne house, but not without hauing first drawne a promise and assurance from *Hipolito*, that hee would within two dayes see them : which he did, being now freed from the curiosity of many eies, and hauing only his to blind, which were of themselues well enough seeled.

There was yet in the house an old
woman

woman, who had long lived there a servant, who being the generall Key-keeper of all the roomes, and so went too and fro through the house, entred easily into those suspitions that a wicked old age is often subiect to, being also led by those many appearances which love in an vnwary young couple (transported with the convenience of an vnexpected liberty) takes not heed to prevent; and hatching this opinion without making shew of it to any, more narrowly watcheth their behauiours, who hauing with contentment enough enioyed some dayes together, concluded it at last better to vse discretely those opportunities, than abuse their fortune; as also the good Nun had carefully aduised them to beware of being surprized in inconueniences.

Hipolito returnes to Naples, from whence he often visits his Nephew for his Necessities sake, who could not so well
 command

of *Hipolito and Isabella.* 95

command her passions, but shee must
shew much more contentment in her
face, when her Vncle was there, then at
other times, feasting him more then her
Husband, who was so blinde and yeel-
ding to them, as he would leaue them
to entertaine one another (as hee call'd
it) and himselfe spend the whole day in
hunting. Wherein *Hipolito* excused
himselfe, being the thing he was most
unfit for, and least delighted in; the
malice that appeared in the doubtfull
lookes of this busie old woman, began
to make them distrust her, so as *Hipolito*
durst neither goe so often, nor stay so
long in the house of *Pompeio*, as before:
who both tooke his strangenesse ill, and
complained of it to his Wife.

Hee gaue her leaue to goe to *Naples*
to see her Mother, with charge to re-
turne with her Vncle; ye may imagine
this iourney was vndertaken with much
gladnesse, and the condition accepted
with

with more. She remained with her a good while; favoured with her Mothers sicknesse, and the commodity of often going to the Nunnery, where she had euer somewhat or other a making for colour of her going.

During her absence from home an Vncle of her Husbands (sometime his gaurdian, a Knight of marke and noble descent) came to see him, and his house, living at that time not farre thence; where hauing some daies expected his Neeces returne, thought her long stay very strange, and told his Nephew that hee was not to winke at such courses, and that since shee had brought little other aduantage to his house, he was to expect from her at least a carefull eie ouer his domesticall affaires, which would run into confusion if shee continued this fashion.

The malicious old woman vpon this occasion could not containe her selfe
from

from discovering to the knight what shee thought of her Lady, beseeching him to take it well, as comming from an ancient and faithfull servant of that house, who could not passe over so great a blemish without violating her duty. He seemed to belecue nothing of what shee said, and like a subtile Fox, reprov'd her sharply taxing the vildnesse of her disposition in conceiving so false and wicked an opinion, of a discrete and vertuous Lady, and her impudence in daring to speake it to him.

The old woman in her owne excuse, told him all the particulars shee had built vpon, which sunke so deepe into the apprehension of this man, as they neuer after left him. As it is the propertie of a malicious nature, to doe injury to what it hates, (according as the passion is defined, to be a disposition of the will intentive to the hurt of others) so this minister of hate, willing to exe-

H

cute

cute her fury vpon these poore louers, tooke the occasion of their mutuall affections, to exercise vpon them her own rage, for not being now able in her withered age, to haue the part in these Loue pleasures, like one euer before liquerish of such fruit, and now not capable of being satisfied, for the three score and fift decreped yeere of her age, that had already disfigured her face, with a hundred fouldes and wrinkles, forbad all beholders not onely the desire, but even opinion. Certainly, as the Childe is the signe of Virginitie past; the scarre, that there hath beene a wound; and *Diomedes* his slipper, that hee had a lame club foote; so was the past ill life of this old woman, enough visible in that crooked disposition of her minde, that droue her forward in the ill fruites of her hate and malice, who as Prisoners sometimes play with their Sheckles and setters, so not know-
ing

ing perhaps how else to passe the time;
and deceiue the languishment of a wea-
ry age, busied her selfe with the afflict-
ing this yong cupple, so shaking (as it
were) the fetters of her lothed Prison
and solitude. Wee must belecue so ; for
it is most credible that in matters vn-
certaine, and that consist in the onely
knowledge of their cause (as are these
inconueniences hapning in the way of
the renowne and credit of faire demea-
ned people) the opinions of honest
minds, will rather accord to their ho-
nour, then suffer the rashnesse of their
iudgements to conclude them vitious. If
we finde some faults in the life and acti-
ons of men and women, we should ra-
ther determine them the defects, or er-
rors of vertue, not yet arriued to the
perfection, then flat wickednesses, pro-
ceeding from a settled vice ; and speake
of them with a modest shame, and cha-
ritable compassion of poore humane

Nature, which cannot produce creatures so perfect and accomplisht, as their liues shall bee altogether exempt from reprehension, but there will euer be somewhat faulty and wanting.

Examples doe teach vs that it hath euer beene an infamous, and dishonest fashion, to blot, and destroy the credit and fame of people, by reason of the importance, and consequence of so many miserable accidents that ensue thereof: for what else doe these exact obseruers, but sacrifice to the worlds malice (as to an euill spirit) their outrages, prouoking vntimely (and often most vniustly) the sorrowes, and furies of such as apprehend themselves iniured. As the Carpenters that had the charge of the *Deliak* Galley, haue by supplying, or lining still the rotten and decayed ribbes with new peeces of wood, kept it sound and entire since the time it was first built: So certainly must wee do
with

with this Reputation, and it is no more hard to mainteine and hold vp. a good name and honour, than a flame, in keeping still vnder it somewhat to support, and preserue it aliue ; but when once fury, and malice haue vtterly quencht and kild it, there is then no more hope left of recouering the one, than renewing the other, when the matter is spent ; yet such is the peruerse-nesse of the age we liue in, and so many ill inclinations there are, as for a little profit, or pleasure, they care not to see all things in combustion ; and as a field full of weeds, so is the world in euery corner, full of vngratefull, and disloyall mindes.

The wise therefore ought to bee circumspect, and as mischiefes are like to arise, seeke to preuent them, and if not vtterly kill and root them out, yet keep them vnder, from getting the mastery of their reputations.

The wise (said the wise man) receiue profit from their enemies, wherefore they at least, whose liues are not without colour of suspition, ought curiously to practise this art and science.

The *Satyr* pressing to imbrace and kisse fire the first time he saw it, *Prometheus* cries to him, *Satyr*, thou wilt wipe the beard of thy chinne; for it burnes being touch't, it giues (besides) warme, and light, and is our most vlesfull element being well and rightly vsed. So doubtlesse, nothing in this world is so hurtfull, but one side or other it may bee approacht and handled, and applied to some vse, and profit. Fooles are the poyson of societie, but such as are descreete and prudent, can turne to their owne profit and advantage, and fit to their owne vse, all the designs of enmitie and hatred. And even so, what proued most hurtfull to *Hipolito* and *Isabella*, might haue become

of *Hipolito and Isabella.* 103

come no lesse profitable to them, if they had beene as carefull and wary as they should haue beene.

To wit, in this time, that this Vncle and guardian (incensed with what hee had from the old womans report) growes from that time vigilant and watchfull ouer them. He vses meanes that *Isabella* is sent for, who soone after arriues accompanied with her Vncle; both of them resolving to honour this old Gentleman, as they did. After their greetings, *Isabella* gaue him a faire wrought Towell, and a Purse of the Nunnes worke, and to her Husband many other litle toyes; wanting no faire and probable excuses for her tardiance. This Knight or gaurdian stayed there three dayes after their returne, prying into all their actions, and watching them strictly, leauing no meanes vnsoight, whereby to discouer their neerest passages.

And as one of that age and Nation, being once toucht with a suspition, yeeldes himselfe easie to persecue in it, vpon any the least appearances that may bee presented to him ; so, though hee perceiued none sufficient to confirme, and settle his iudgement vpon, yet the insufficiency that hee knew in his Nephew, and the disparitie betweene his wife and him made him dislike the honest priuacies betweene her and her Vncle, although they stretch no farther than might bee permitted. Hee resolues before his departure to put a man to his Nephew to waite on him in his Chamber, that had beene of his owne breeding, whom hee furnish't with all such instructions as he thought the fittest to bring him to the knowledge of what hee desired to discouer.

This Chamberlaine is willingly receiued of both the Husband and the Wife too, who nothing suspecting him
for

for that Centinell and Watch-man
ouer her, that her Vncle had designed
him for, laboured to make him hers by
the deserts of a good and kinde vsage.
Hipolito on the other side, let passe no
occasion that might binde him to him;
but vnder the disguise of a fained af-
fection to their seruice, and acknow-
ledgment of his obligation (this crafty
malitious fellow) soothes, and lulls
them a sleepe. Thus this young coup-
ple ingulfed in the midst of their plea-
sures, guided by the onely motion of
their desires, foresee not the Shelues,
and Rockes that threaten them with
the Shipwracke and vtter losse of all
their contentment.

So hurtfull often times is our happi-
nesse, in hindring the pursuite of our
designes, through the sloath, negli-
gence, and inconsideration, with which
it stupifies vs, and drives vs head-long
to our ruine.

This

This Chamberlaine seconded with the old woman, (to whom the Knight had also declared his intention) had within a moneth or two, at certaine times of *Hipolito's* repaire to his Masters house, perceiued some what betwene them, which hee forthwith acquainted the Knight withall. who thereupon goes to *Naples*, where (like enough by his meanes) there was already some whispering rumour spread about of this newes; and where no sooner arriued, but without any word to his Brother *Fabritio*, or his wife *Livia*, of what led him thither; hee goes to the Notary; who was *Hipolito's* chiefe refuge, and tells him, that if his Brother out of hand restrained not his dishonest frequentation with his Neece, hee was in danger ere long to smart for it, adding how much they abused the aduantage of their neere alliance; and that hee had not beleened
the

the first report of the vnlawfull priuacies that had long beene betweene them, but now was so vndoubtedly resolved thereof, as hee could no longer bee ignorant, or conceale them: and that (saue for the respect and honour of their house) he had ere then, taken such reuenge as had befitted such a forfait: how hee had reuealed it to none but himselfe onely, as one who best, and with least scandall might stop the progresse of the businesse, and bury it: and whose wisdom hee knew of abilitie, for so discrete a conduct, and as the consequence of the affaire required. All the allegations that the Notary could make to the contrary of this Knights opinion, and to possesse him with other beliefe of his Brother and Neece, and how there was nothing, that cold bee iudged more licentious between them, then their neere alliance permitted, serued to no purpose.

In

In conclusion, hee intreated him that he might know no more such fashions in his Brother, least he found his course more roughly interrupted than hee looked for.

This Notary mistrusted nothing of the truth the knight had told him, being himselfe a man that vsed not to condemne any kinde of this vice, and besides, had before (as granted) warned his Brother to bee wary in the menage of his affaires, aduertising him how hard a matter it was for him, long to conceale them, if hee once gaue ouer their conduct, wholly to the libertie of his affections. Soone after (then) hee tells him what the Knight had discouered; whereupon he refrained from visiting his Neece as before, saue by letters, which yet were frequent, and gaue her often newes of him. Shee on the other side (to whom writing was not sufficient) beeing of nature apt enough
to

to expose to all dangers her Fortune, and Life, to giue the greater prooffe to her affection, to whome she had vowed it; and condemning all artifice of dissimulation, and euen discretion, as proceeding from a minde, too free within it selfe, and exempt from passion; full of vnrest, could not containe her selfe, from discovering the alteration in her thoughts, but yeelded to rage, and displeasure (vpon all occasions) against this old woman, and often against her new man, of whom shee was now growne distrustfull.

Being aduertized by *Hipolito*, of an intention hee had to accompany the Prince of *Lusignan* to *Rome*; her quicke inuention supplied her readily, with a colourable occasion to goe to *Naples*, and such as her Husband was most willing with, there shee learned more particularly, all what this Knight had told the Notary, by the aduice of
whom,

whom, and of the Nunne, *Hipolito* goes to *Rome*.

Isabella's iourney was not approued of by the Knight her Vncle ; and confirmed in him, and in others, the doubt into which he was entred of this Loue, and in her Mother also, who thought much more of it then she spake.

During *Hipolito's* abode at *Rome*, the old Woman and the Chamberlaine had but few pleasant houres, but still she found somewhat or other amisse in their actions : so as one day, this old carcasse told her, that for being too true a seruant to her Master, her Lady lou'd her not ; and that if shee could haue seene and said nothing, she had liued a quieter life. This came to the Husbands eares ; who sounding not the bottome of it, past it ouer.

The Chamberlain was more subtile, for though he could heare it said, that they were worthy of hate, that could
indure

indure to serue in a place, where they were knowne to be onely set to doe base offices; and serue for candles to light strangers into all the basenesse of the house, with much more to that purpose, yet, hee stopt eare and mouth, to all, and seeming to vnderstand nothing of it, made likewise no answere to any thing.

The Knight who had beene still informed of all things, came againe to his Nephew: where freely hee told his Neece, of his discontent at her fashion of life, intreating her to change it, or that else hee was to make the world know how vnworthy she was, to hold the honour of such a house and alliance. All her well coucht and propable speeches (which the many angry teares of her great heart would not of a long time giue passage to) did no whit abate the obstinacy of this Vncle; who at length, more sweetning his speech, then
altering

altering his opinion ; told her, that to make her innocence appeare, and remooue all misdoubts (since things were already come to so ill a passe) she was by a change of life to remooue their cause ; and that to this, there wanted but her will, by the resolution whereof, shee might alwayes make her selfe appeare, such as shee desired the World should iudge her. After hauing well thought of what course was fittest for her to take, shee had recourse to the inforced remedy of dissimulation ; Shee spake not so much of her Vncle as before, nor so often commended his actions, nor curiously enquired after him, yet shee often heard newes of him, though not so secretly, but still this Chamberlaine perceiued, and tooke notice of frequent messages to his Lady, which his Master had no word of ; shee shewed her selfe more easie to please, and beserued than in former times, and to
shew

shew her purpose of confining her thoughts, within the compasse of her house, and attend onely to the care of her domestick affaires, shee tooke the charge of them vpon her, with so fit and dexterous a management, that one would haue thought, shee had busied the study of her whole life in them. Shee caused to bee made her a Cabinet, or study, with the entry into it of her garderober, or inner Chamber, and a passage out into the Garden of the house, by a narrow staire-case glased of either side, and the Glasse couered with false windows, to see, and not to be seen. Shee caused it to be Varnish't, Gilt, adorned with Pictures, Bookes, China coffers, and other such singularities as people that vnderstand, and are curious in that kinde vse to haue. There shee spent such time as the companie of her Husband, Strangers, and Household businesse left free to her. Shee went some-

times to *Naples*, but stayed not; three^c or foure moneths together, she was constant to this new life, with much content to her Husband, Mother, and the Knight her Vncle.

During her *Hipolito's* absence, shee caused to bee made a Bracelet of knots of her Haire to weare on his arme, studded with Rubies, and Diamonds, with a large locke of Gold foure square, and set with a rich stone at each corner, the midst was Inameled blew, resembling clouds sown with Teares halfe hidden, and little appearing, and written about, *Codnuntur non siccantur*, which shee sent with this letter.

TO beare alwayes a face differing from my passions, to haue my words contrary to my thoughts, my deedes to my will, teares in my heart and laughter in my mouth, anguish in my soule, and ioy in my lookes; disdaine within,
and

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and respect in outward appearance, to bee
alwayes present, where my minde and
thoughts are utterly absent, to faine
a doting affection, out of a perfect loa-
thing. In brieft, to shew a full content in
living vnder the subiection of a most
contrary seruitude; these are the ordi-
nary pleasures of my life. Till now, the
hope I gane my selfe, that it might bee,
Heauen would in the end grow weary of
afflicting vs, hath inabled me to strug-
gle with the miseries of this my strange
condition; But I must confesse, I doe
now begin to feele so great a failing in
the force of my patience, as if I finde not
my selfe speedily assisted, with the de-
monstration of some thought and care of
your part for my deliuerance, I shall gine
ouer the care of my life; for alas it were
but vnprofitable to you, and to mee most
miserable. Thinke on it, and make mee,
I beseech you, capable of your deliberati-
on, and keepe with the memory of my
I 2 truth,

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*truth, this pledge (perhaps my last)
that herewith I send you.*

This letter so mooved *Hipolito*, as immediately vpon the receipt of them, hee returned to *Naples*, where he could not stay three dayes without seeing his Neece, with whome (after the *Husbands* many welcommings) hee was retained certaine dayes with more ease than needed.

Alas that the first day could not passe, without reducing to them their former fashion ; they stirred not out of their Cabinet, the Husband was left, the care of his affaires neglected ; such as came to speake of them, had no more audience or accesse : all businesse, all company was displeasing and troublesome, all the Husband could haue, was after suppers, some leane entertainment, ming'ed oftentimes with certaine ambiguous speeches, and smiles saouring
more

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more of mockery, or contempt than otherwise : which began at last to displease him, and they perceived it, and with all, were told by *Isabella's* maide *Julia*, that the old Woman, and Chamberlaine, were diligent priers into their behaviours, and held houely little counsailes betweene themselves of their actions ; which made them presume, that they would not faile to giue the Knight her Vncle notice of euery thing. *Hipolito* hereupon takes new counsaile, which was (hauing informed himselfe perfectly of the secreatest meane of comming into the Garden, by a little doore out of the Parke, and thence into the Cabinet by the close staires) to returne to *Naples*, as he did, and thence fained a iourney to the Court of *Sauoy* ; this is giuen out in the house, and his Brothers being aduertised of it, doe gladly furnish him with Horses, Monney, and Letters of fauour to their friends.

friends. Hee would yet carry but one Lacquey with him, whome hee wholly affied in, and with him went to a house of his Brothers the Notary (some eight miles from *Naples* where hee at that time was) from thence his *Isabella* had newes of him; and there he lay concealed for the space of two moneths; going thence euery second or third night to see her hauing found by-waies into the Parke, whence he past into the Garden, and so into the Cabinet; hee arriued there commonly at nine or ten at night, meane while his man held his Horses in a most vnhanterd, and remote place of the parke, where hee awaited him til two or three in the morning, and to auoid all suspicion, shee vsed before, to retire her selfe into her Cabinet after Suppers, and lye there alone.

From the beginning of *September*, till about the end of *October*, this fashion held

held betweene them : But alas, the night hath eyes, and trueth is seene in the darke. Tis knowne *Hipolito* conceales himselfe in this house. *Pompeio's* Vncle that had vnderstood all the passage of his former iourney, knowes this last deceit too, but not the conuiance of the Cabinet. Hee growes more enraged than euer ; goes to his Neece, taunts her with all the sharpest language hee had, threatening her and her *Hipolito*, with no lesse than an ignominious death ; tells all to the Husband, reproching him for his little sence of this iniury, and his want of courage to revenge it.

And hauing sufficiently plaide his part there, goes forthwith to *Naples*, and does there also the like, discovering all to *Fabritio* and his wife, from point to point, how euery particular had past, the warnings hee had giuen, and intreaties he had made to them to de-

sist from their course : then inueyes against the Notary, who denies his Brothers being at his house (at least to his knowledg, himselfe being then at *Naples*) *Hipolito* was forthwith aduertized of this, to the end hee might not bee found there ; but because those of the house, could not so readily be instructed (some woman and a childe affirming that he had beene there, and was but two dayes before gone from thence) this made all the rest credible, & after all the bitternesse that the displeasure of such an affaire could put into his words, and that hee had therewith bound his two brothers by their oathes not to receiue *Hipolito*, this Vncle left them ; resolving to vse all meanes to surprize him.

Thus, this poore miserable Louer, beaten with so many tempests, left of his chiefeft friends, abandoned of all hope, findes (though too late) how
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slippery is the downe-fall of our pleasures, and how great the disproportion is of the short contentments, and long miseries of this life.

Hee retires himselfe to his Brother *Scipio's* house, who was married some twelue miles from *Naples*, in the way to *Suca*. There he remained some daies, and after hauing rested his wits diuerse-ly distracted, and ouerwrought with the consideration of the extremitie hee was in, and what course was fittest to bee taken, hee resolved by the aduice of his Brother (a man more subtile in vice, than ingenious in vertuous matters) to cause dispersed abroad, a rumor that hee was slaine, hoping by this meane to drowne al noise already spread of matters past, and lay a certaine ground where on to build the last designe for the contentment of his Mistressse and himselfe.

Before he began to put this in execution,

tion, he sent her a Tablet full of stanzas written vpon the subiect of his Fortune, couered with Gold, sown full of Thornes to the life in Inameled worke, and in the midst of either face was a Tombe of blacke Amell, and on the top of it a Semperuive to the life, and at the foote written, *Del piacer Sepolto la speranza viua*; with this letter following, which the Nunne (whom he sent it to,) caused to be deliuered.

LEt not these accidents that combat vs, I beseech you, driue you into despaire of their remedy. Beleene mee; as long as Heauen shall spare mee life, our misfortunes shall enioy no peaceable victory ouer vs, nor fall on vs vnresisted And since what you suffer, proceeds only through my occasion, if my death could deliuer you, I should hold it most happily gained; but knowing it unauailable, and that it would rid onely me out
of

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of paine ; to faigne it may perhaps giue
remedy to vs both. Let not then the
newes you shall heare of it afflict you, as
a truth ; though in appearance as be-
leeuing it. 'Tis the last, and best meane
I haue resolved on, to gaine vs the free-
dome of our contentments : desiring
therein onely, and onely aiming at your
happinesse, and that I may still enioy your
loue, bee happy to receiue your comman-
dements, and serue you hauing nothing
so deeply ingraued in my soule, as the
faithfull obseruance I owe you ; and if
any remembrance shall accompany it's
immortalitie, beleeue, it will bee onely
that of your name, and of my obligati-
on ; the which though it bee vnpossible
for mee to repay, my will at least shall
newer faile mee. But I as yet, giue you
onely words, the shadow ; I hope shortly,
my deedes will proue enough fortunate,
to let you see the body.

Soone

Soone as *Hipolito* was sure his Mistress had receiued his letters, hee began to play his fained *Tragedy*, certaine people are set on, who come betimes in the morning to his Brothers lodging, telling him that there was a man slaine that night in the next Village, vpon the way to his house, with the Horse hee rode on, and it should seeme was his younger Brother. He rises hastily, and goes to the place whither these people led him where he found a thing trust vp in forme of a man, which hee had caused to be stuf with haye, and drest vp in a sute, his Brother had sometime worne, cut and mangled in diuerse places resembling blowes, and thrusts with swords, and all besmeared with blood, and his horse also dead by him. He takes a Notary of the Village, and a Priest for his purpose, and in presence of those that conducted him thither, and some other of his owne people,
caused

caused to bee made a verball proceſſe, how his Brother *Hipolito* had beene by them found in that place, newly ſlaine with ſomany hurts, in ſuch places, clad in ſuch a ſute, his Horſe likewise dead, beſide him ; and inſtantly , omitting nothing that might make all credible, cauſed that bundle, or falſe man to bee buried as if it had beene the body of *Hipolito* , in the Church of that Village ; puts him ſelfe into blacks, and ſends forthwith , the verball proceſſe to *Naples* to his Brothers ; ere long, the death of *Hipolito* was generally bruted about, and came to the cares of *Pompeio* and his wife , who ſaining to belecue it , (and the Husband belecuing) ſeemed much to lament it.

The Winter was at that time well ſpent , when *Hipolito* hauing executed this ſtratagem , gets him diſguiſed all alone, on foote, by night, by vnused by-
wayes

wayes to the Parke of *Pompeio's* houses and lodges in his Mistresses Cabinet, where hee was two dayes, there they consulted of what was to bee done, for their deliuey out of thraldome.

It was concluded then, that they must resolue for *Cypres*, or *Candy*, and that, to that effect hee would provide a Barke, and lay it ready victualled, and furnisht of all things fit, against the end of *March*, or beginning of *April* next. For this purpose shee gaue him such monies as shee had, resolving with-all, to employ her vitermost indeauour, to get together the most shee could, to make their voyage, and maintaine them after. In the meane time, they resolued, he was to visite her, with the ofttest, and secretest meanes hee could, hauing provided himselfe, of some safe retraite for himselfe not farre off.

Being gone, shee aduised with her selfe, to perswade her Husband to make

a voyage into *France*, the peace being made betweene the Kings of *France*, and *Naples*. Shee wanted no faire inducements to vrge him with ; how it was a shame for one of his age, & place in the world, to haue neuer seene other than the angle hee was borne in : that this voyage would fashion, and make him vp better ; and yeeld him more known, and honoured of the best and Noblest company : that hee had not yet gained that esteeme in the World, that hee might enable himselfe to expect , by more enriching his minde, with experience to iudge, and abilitie to discourse, in which an infinite of others outwent him, and were therefore preferred, and respected before him : which both in birth and meanes, and all other things, were farre to yeeld to him : and how though his present estate in possession yeelded him not much, shee would finde him enough, without

without much preiudicing it, for that effect: that his lands were well timbred, so as the sale of foure, or five thousand crownes worth, would not bee much mist: that they would lease out part of their lands, and make that way as much more mony in incommes: and that with such alike summe, he might make his voyage with credit and honour: how for her part, shee would keepe but her maides, and one man, and to auoid expences, would retire her selfe to *Naples* to her Mother, who shee knew would thinke her company no trouble.

Shee gildes her language so well, that her Husband beginnes to relish the motion, and goes to his Vncle and gardian, and communicates it to him who likes well enough of the businesse; and giues the charge to *Isabella*, to finde Merchants, and make the bargain with them, saying, he would authorize

thorize her, because her Husband was yet in his minoritie:

You may imagine whether shee bestirred her selfe or no, or *Hipolito* of the other side, who (having provided a Barke, Rigged, Victualled, and furnisht with all things necessary to make the voyage into *Cypres*, vpon the first day of *April*) goes confidently about with his Lacquey disguised, like Venetian Merchants, coasting the Country, to look out some place of retraite for himselfe neere his Mistresses house; and as there is no difficultie, but money passes through it, hee gaines by that baite, a Countrey fellow that dwelt in a little house, by a Wood's side; farre enough from neighbours, and onely three miles off from his Mistresse; where he remained till the period of his misfortune, faining himselfe fled out of *Venice* for certaine debts, and that during his absence, his friends were labour-

K

ring

ring some reasonable composition for him, with his Creditours, his poore Hoste, for the profit hee receiued by him, could haue wisht him still in businesse : hauing expressly forbidden those of his house, not to discouer him to any one, serued him with all things for himselfe, and his Horses.

When hee went by night to see his Mistresse (which was often) hee made his Host belecue, that it was either to speake with some that negotiated for him, or to deliuer, or to receiue letters at a place they were still by appointment left.

In the meane time, *Isabella* for her part was not idle, for hauing bargained for five thousand crownes worth of timber, with Merchants that had the mony ready at an howers warning, and leased out a great part of her Husbands lands for certaine yeeres, for the receipt of five thousand more, shee aduertized

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uertized the Knight her Vncle of it, and intreats of him to come the eighteenth of March, to see the covenants dispatch for his Nephew, her Husband, at his house : whither hee came the seuenteenth day, to dinner.

Hipolito and *Isabella* had determined (this money being receiued, and lockt vp in her Cabinet, which they made account would be at the furthest by the twentieth day) to depart the night following vpon *Hipolito's* Horses, hee carrying his Mistresse behinde him ; and his man, and her maid vpon another Horse, all laden with as much as they could carry in money, and Iewels, and gaine that night the Port *Gaietta*, and straight hoise vp the sailes of the Barke that lay ready for them, accommodated at all points, as well with Linnen, Cloathes, Bookes, as all other necessary moucables.

The Knights two spies had so well

K 2

watcht

watcht ouer the vnfortunate *Isabella*, that they had heard some one walking and talking in the night with her in her Cabinet, who they knew were none of her women, hauing found them both a sleepe in her gardrobe: besides, had further discouered, that *Julia* did often times conuey meat, and wine thither, without telling for whom: and at three or foure seuerall times, that it had rained in the night, they had tract the footing of some person, going and comming through the Garden, to the staire of the Cabinet, and thence to the parke gate, and the entrie thereof beaten with the footing of a Horse.

All this is told to the Knight, soone after his arriual, who without seeming to haue knowne any thing new, passes the rest of the day in discours of his Nephew's voyage; of the traine he should carry with him, of the

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the gouernment of his expences ; and time of his stay abroad , and his returne.

The night being come, hee sent one of his men to watch without the Park gate, wich was fastned onely, but that of the Garden lockt euery night, commanding him to conceale himselfe all hee could, and speak to no man of it, and if hee saw any one come in that way, to bring him present word. That night there appeared nothing ; the next morning betimes, the Marchants come, the couenants are past, and dispatcht, the last monies receiued and lockt into *Isabella's* Cabinet, and early enough for her to aduertise *Hipolito* of it, by that meane they vsed to heare from one another those daies they met not, which was by leauing their letters in a hollow tree in the Parke, where they fetcht, or sent for them at a fit houre. *Hipolito* sent his man thither

that night at Supper time, who found a little note, containing the aduertisement of all.

The night comming, the Knight sends his man againe as before. Misfortune and mischiefe intentiue to the ruine of these vnhappy louers, and meaning to set them for patternes to shew how little auailes mans foresight, to withstand the Heauen's appointment; and that when we hold the end of our hopes neereſt, and moſt certaine, 'tis then commonly, that we feele the euentſ fartheſt off, and moſt contrary to our expectations: This miſchiefe (I ſay) would that *Hipolito*, who now preſumed all things ſo happily laid, as there wanted nothing but to goe to take his *Iſabella*, (and whom the long expectance of this ſo deſired houre, had made vitterly impatient of any longer ſtay) came his accuſtomed way, at nine of the clock at night, ha-
uing

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uing left his man, and Horses in the Parke.

The Knight's man hauing discouered them, comes to his master vndiscouered by any, tells him what hee had seene; hee sends him with two more of his men with Pistolls to make good the Parke gate and stay by force such as were gone in, or shoote them if they prest out, they found meanes to get out vndiscouered before the gates of the house where shut in.

The Knight went to bed, so did his Nephew soone after, and was as soone a sleepe; when he knew his men gone, this Knight rises, and sends a Gentleman of his, whom hee kept with him, for his Nephew's man, him hee commanded, to watch and bring him word, when his Neeces maides should bee gone out into her inner Chamber; which hauing done, he sends this Gentleman of his, commanding him with

a sword drawne to keepe the women vpon their liues, from stirring out of the roome they were in, or making any noife, or exclamation, till they were sent for out.

Julia was within, with her Mistresse in her Cabinet. In the meane time, plants himselfe at the doore of the Cabinet, listning what was done there, hee could heare speaking, but not the words; opening and shutting of cofers, remouing of monies, and other things; at length, after a whiles stay, being neere eleuen of the clock hee heard *Julia* comming to the doore, saying: I will goe see then Madam, if all the house be a sleepe, and take these purses that I haue: and her Mistresse answering her, stay not then, for tis time wee were gone; thereupon the maid halfe opening the doore, percciued this man that presses to enter in, which shee strone against, and during their contention,

tion, *Hipolito* saues himselfe by the staires into the garden, thinking that he not being taken, his Mistresse should runne no hazard : yet hee could not shift himselfe away so sodainely, but the Knight hauing borne ope the dore, might perceiue him shutting the other after him.

His Nephew's man, that he had put to him, entred the Cabinet with him : as soone as *Isabella* saw that fellow, she could not hold from flying furiously at his face, with such iniuryes as witnest the beliefe she had of being discovered by him.

The Knight sends him to wake, and bring his Master, and sends a man hee had there of his owne in the next roome, along with *Julia*, into the Chamber herselfe lay in, to the end, to gaine the truth out of her, more easily by this separation.

Nature then shewed sufficiently in
this

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this poore Lady, how shee pleases her selfe, often times to stray from the course of her ordinary rules, and make to appeare in subiects wee esteeme weake and lesse perfect, high and great effects; shewing vs in this woman, how farre differing a soule from the vulgar, and capable of rare vertues, is often found in that sex: and how a resolution hauing once taken sure footing in them, remaines commonly more firme, and immooueable, than in men; she then, in this crosse and vnexpected accident, instead of hauing recourse to Teares, and Praiers, (the refuge naturall to the weakenesse some impute to women) armed her selfe (contrary-wise) with such an vnstirred assurance, as amazed her enemies: for this Vncle hauing set his dagger to her throat, and asking her who it was went downe the staires and whither shee was going, at such an houre with that money, which

which was part put up into bagges and
sackes, and part spread upon the table;
shee without shew of amazement, told
him, that it was the fashion of a poore
soul'd man, to speake to a woman with
his armes in his hand, and that without
more threatning it was an easie matter
to kill one who resisted not ; that ne-
uer noble, nor honest minde, vsed to
alot any part of his time, to so base oc-
cupations, as to play the houely euef-
droper and spie ouer the actions of an
honest woman : that no body was
gone downe the staires, but that shee
then shut that doore, when her maid
opened the other to go fetch purses, to
put up the rest of that money vpon the
table, to be lockt vp : that her bidding
of her returne quickly, that they might
be gone, was to dispatch her sooner to
bed, because it was late.

The Husband being come, was not
a little amazed at the newes his Vncle
tels

tels him, which before hee dreamt not of: yet, euen the Vncle himselfe, begins a little to stagger in his confidence, seeing the constancy of this woman; when his man came to tell him, if *Isabella* might be assured her life, that shee would confesse the truth.

The Knight leaues *Isabella* in guard, with this seruant of his, and his Gentleman, commanding them upon their liues, not to suffer her to rise out of a Chaire, where they made her sit; and thence, hee and his Nephew goes into the Chamber where *Julia* was, where they were scarce entred, when she retaining of the base condition of a low seruile heart, fals full of teares at their feet, begging pardon; which is promised her, vpon a true relation of her Ladies practises and intent, which shee made, and was forthwith brought to *Isabella*, who beholding her with them, and looking her in the face, guest
how

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how the matter went, and forcing to rise vp, said ; Ah false treacher, why am I not suffered yet before I die, to punish thy detestable disloyalty ?

They made this maid auouch to her all she had told them.

They ransackt her coffers, which were all open ; in one of them they found all the letters *Hipolito* had written to her, bound vp by themselves ; they found in another, her Jewels ranged together ; and not farre off, two other little boxes of *Mercury sublimate*, and other poisons made into Pilles ; in the vpper part of one of the Chests, they found laid in a place apparant enough to the sight, this following Euidence, written with her hand.

I Know that the precipitation of your
Iudgments is so sudden, so moued
with passion, and weighing to the worser
part;

part; As that my departure shall bee no
sooner knowne, than blamed of you; and
my selfe condemned as an incestuous a-
dulteresse, in leauing one, who is held to
bee my Husband to goe away with him,
that is reputed my Vncle.

But I beseech all those, before whose
eyes this Euidence shall come, that ha-
uing patience to read it, they will rather
settle their opinions vpon the certaine
assurance of the truth they finde in it,
than vpon the false appearance of a com-
mon error. 'Tis an exceeding great
griefe to mee, that in defence of my inno-
cence, I must discover both my fault, and
my shame, and inhumanly breake open
the Sepulchre, and disease the bones of
the dead, taint the honour, and blemish
the memory of her that brought mee into
the World: But since I haue onely this
meane, whereby to wash off the staine of
my reputation, I beseech her Ghost to
pardon mee, and both God and men not

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to impute to impiety, and ingratitude, what I am compelled unto through necessity, and for my iustification.

It is knowne, and I haue learned, that the Lawes doe say, that onely the consent makes the marriage: which consent cannot proceed but from a voluntary and free will, and exempt from all force and constraint, the which being used therein, forbids what arises thence, to bee called a consent of the will; and consequently barres all possibility of establishing a marriage vpon the contrary of that whence onely it ought necessarily to come.

There is not any one that hath beene practised with any frequency in the businesse of our house, but must needs know what artifices, subtilities, what authority, and force, what threatnings and ill vsages, my Father (or hee whom I did esteeme for such) and those of whom I depended, haue used towards mee, to
make

make mee condescend to the Marriage with Signior Pompeo; their force and constraint, had the power to make mee his Concubine, not his wife; my will contradicting it, and the abilitie of becoming so, being taken from mee, having promised, and given my selfe before for wife to Hipolitō.

And since the Lawes permit such as enter into any Religion by force, who both doe, and sweare the obligation of those vsuall vowes; since the Lawes (I say) doe giue them the abilitie to disspence with those, and giue over their orders; why shall not Marriage haue the like power, whereof the promises cannot binde those more strictly who make them to men, than the vowes of Religion doe those that sweare them to God? I am not ignorant, that the common opinion enery one hath, that Hipolito as Brother to my Father, and therefore my Vncle, does therby conclude my Marri-

of Hipolito and Isabella. 145

age with him unlawfull : But it is not so long since, but I may entreate some yet of this age to remember, that about eightene or twenty yeeres since, the King sent to Naples the Marquesse of Coria, a Spaniard, who stayed there some time, during which, he made loue to my Mother, and gained such interest in her, as that during the absence of Signior Fabritio her Husband, in a voyage hee made to his Holinesse, his affection had arrived to what the affections of men doe vsually pretend. For in this time I was begotten : I call God to witnesse of my words, and that I speake a perfect truth. My Mothers Nurse, and her Sister in law the Nunne, are yet both living, who are neither of them ignorant hereof.

But to alledge a prooffe that may at all times bee produced, I assure my selfe, there may be found among the Registers of the Towne-Treazor, the day of the
L departure

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departure of Signior Fabritio to Rome, and of his returne to Naples ; and by his charges, and their discharge in his imployment, and the expedition hee obtained of his Holinesse, may bee seene the day of my Birth in his papers, and that of my Baptisme in the Registers of the Church where I received it.

Let these bee brought, and it will bee found that it cannot be I should bee his Daugbter ; since by the immoneable Lawes of Nature, a child (to live) must of necessity bee borne either upon the seventh, ninth, or eleventh month after Conception : And so farre was it from any of these, as in the beginning of the eighth after his returne, I was borne ; a time altogether insufficient, and incapable of giuing life to a child.

Being not Daugbter to Fabritio, I am not Neece, nor of kinne to Hipolito : Now since freedome and libersy begets she will, she will consent, and consent she

of Hipolito and Isabella. 147

*the Marriage; and that all this hath
giuen mee for wife to Hipolito: Since no
alliance can bee any barre betweene vs;
since force, or violence drawes, or workes
no obligation; and since by that onely,
I was cast vnder the bondage and serui-
tude of Pompeio: why shall it not bee
lawfull for mee to redeeme my libertie,
from the vniust vsurpation, of him that
hath too long abused, and enioyed by
violence, what was none of his; and re-
store my selfe, into the hands of him to
whom God, the Lawes, my Election, and
my Faith hath giuen me.*

*The contentment that I giue my selfe,
in being able to worke my release from
mine enemies; makes me resolute to suf-
fer with cheerefulnesse, all the iniuries
of Fortune, of the Heauens, of the Time,
of Necessitie, and all that can happen me
in a strang Clime: Where resolved to
goe confine my selfe, and end the rest
of my dayes; I beg of my friends no*

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departure of Signior Fabritio to Rome, and of his returne to Naples ; and by his charges, and their discharge in his employment, and the expedition hee obtained of his Holinesse, may hee see the day of my Birth in his papers, and that of my Baptisme in the Registers of the Church where I received it.

Let these be brought, and it will be found that it cannot be I should be his Daughter ; since by the immovable Lawes of Nature, a child (to live) must of necessity be borne either upon the seventh, ninth, or eleventh month after Conception : And so farre was it from any of these, as in the beginning of the eighth after his returne, I was borne ; a time altogether insufficient, and incapable of giuing life to a child.

Being not Daughter to Fabritio, I am not Neece, nor of kinne to Hipolito : Now since freedom and liberty begets the will, the will consent, and consent
the

of Hipolito and Isabella. 147

*the Marriage; and that all this hath
giuen mee for wife to Hipolito: Since no
alliance can bee any barre betweene vs;
since force, or violence drawes, or workes
no obligation; and since by that onely,
I was cast vnder the bondage and serui-
tude of Pompeio: why shall it not bee
lawfull for mee to redeeme my libertie,
from the vniust vsurpation, of him that
hath too long abused, and enioyed by
violence, what was none of his; and re-
store my selfe, into the hands of him to
whom God, the Lawes, my Election, and
my Faith hath giuen me.*

*The contentment that I giue my selfe,
in being able to worke my release from
mine enemies; makes me resolute to suf-
fer with cheerefulnesse, all the iniuries
of Fortune, of the Heauens, of the Time,
of Necessitie, and all that can happen me
in a strang Clime: Where resolved to
goe confine my selfe, and end the rest
of my dayes; I beg of my friends no
L 2 more,*

more, than to forget my name, and imagine me dead.

This Evidence being read, shee was asked, what shee intended with those poysons ; shee said, shee made them to take, if shee were pursued so narrowly, as shee could not saue her selfe ; to the end, to barre her enemies the contentment, and preuent the mischiefe of falling aliuie into their power.

After shee had confest much more, and more voluntarily, than shee was questioned ; the Vncle said ; since you determined to bee your owne executioner, and punish your owne dishonesty ; it were pity (though you haue beene preuented in the execution of so wicked an enterprise) that you should bee frustrated too, in the iust punishment, you haue so well deserued, and so prouidently prepared for you selfe ; and therefore you are speedily, by the
meanes

meane of your owne appointment, to receiue your death; wherewith taking one of the pilles, which her Vncle presented her, she answered them; it is for them that haue either pleasure, or desire of life, to seeke the meanes to keep it; and for such as haue lost both the one, and the other, to hasten the end of it, and slide to death, which is so farre from being a thing odious to mee, (being deprived of my *Hipolito*) as that (were ye as inclinable to pity, and should deny it mee, as you are bent to cruelty, and to giue it me) I would beseech you, to let mee take it with my owne hands.

• Now after all the trecherous and ignoble courses you haue taken against mee; I must confesse my selfe much bound to you, for shortning my miserable life, whose end, is as pleasing to mee, as the course hath beene vnfortunate: hoping that as God doth af-

ford you by this meane, the triumph of your desires ouer me, and mee the end of my afflictions ; hee will also please to giue my soule her rest in eternall blisse , which I humbly craue of him, and that the long paines of my life, and vniust Martyrdome of my death, may obtaine mee his pittie, and my sinnes their pardon.

Shee spake these words with so resolute, and vnmoued a face, and fashion, that all those about her, were seized with astonishment and pittie.

Her Vncle himselfe, and Husband began to speake to her, testifying a moderation of their doome, and rage ; when she swallowed the pill, and with a nimble hand taking two more, said, One is too few, and nothing is hard to doe that giues vs contentment, and barres our enemies the pleasure of a long vengeance.

Soone after, the force and quantitie
of

of the poyson wrought his effect ; and seizing all the vitall parts, left her only power to speake these last words : Receiue, receiue, my *Hipolito*, these last proofes of my affection ; and know by my death, what power a faithfull loue hath in a soule resolued : and vpon that word yeelded vp the ghost, in the same chaire, where they had set her : leaving her memory no lesse admirable, for the constancy of her end, then remarkable, for the boldnesse of her desperate enterprise.

Here (Reader) with *Isabella's* end, would I end too ; so wearied I am, with the already too sad relation of these vnhappy Louers fortunes, and most vnwilling to adde hereto, the lamentable end of the poore *Hipolito*, whom my Authour tels mee, his *Isabella's* death, made so desperate a despi- ser of his owne life, as to forsake all his hopes, meanes of sustenance, friends
and

and allies, and die an exile to his Countrey for her reuenges sake.

For I finde that within few weekes after her death, hee slew her Husband and his Vncle vpon their way, in a journey to *Rome* ; for which fact, neither his Brothers (who being questioned about him, were driuen to much trouble for him) nor any other friend, or his Country durst owne him : but hee was constrained (being oppressed with extreme want) to returne himselfe into the State of *Venice*, where five yeeres after *Isabella's* death, to auoid staruing, he was inforced to marry a Widdow that had some reasonable meanes to sustaine him a while with, but no more than what hee had in a short time so farre wasted, as shee (as well out of discontentment thereat, as also discouering perhaps withall, the many degrees of comparifon betweene the loue shee found hee bore her, and
might

might imagine: hee might beare to an *Isabella*, or one more worthy of him than shee, who was neither handsome, nor well natured) poysoned him, as it was thought, with a messe of broath, shee caused to bee made for him one morning, that he had taken a little Physick, for some indisposition of body he complained of.

There was found in his Study after his death, a table which it seemed, hee had not long before caused to be made, wherein there was painted his *Isabella* lying along dead, with her eyes closed, and himselfe kneeling at her feet, with certaine verses vnder written; speaking (it seemes) to her eyes. The verses were to this purpose.

Sleepe

Sleepe in your lids (ye loved shades
Of my vail'd sunnes;) I vow
Tis not to spare my blood, that thus
I spill my teares on you.
Griefe and affliction (only due
To me) are iustly bent
To giue me a wasting life, & endure
A lasting languishment.
That when mine eyes can weepe no more,
My heart might bleed; and I
(Because I liu'd the longer life)
A longer death might die.

FINIS.

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